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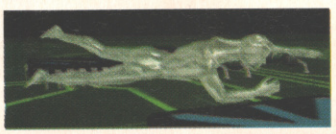

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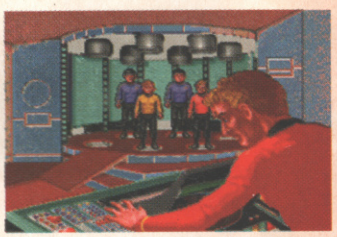

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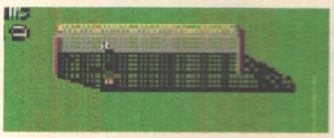

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NEWS

Why Silicon Graphics Workstations should keep game costs down; Sega launches its new Mega-CD/Mega Drive handheld machine; and the latest news on how well the Jaguar is selling.

SILICON GRAPHICS INFILTRATES GAMES INDUSTRY

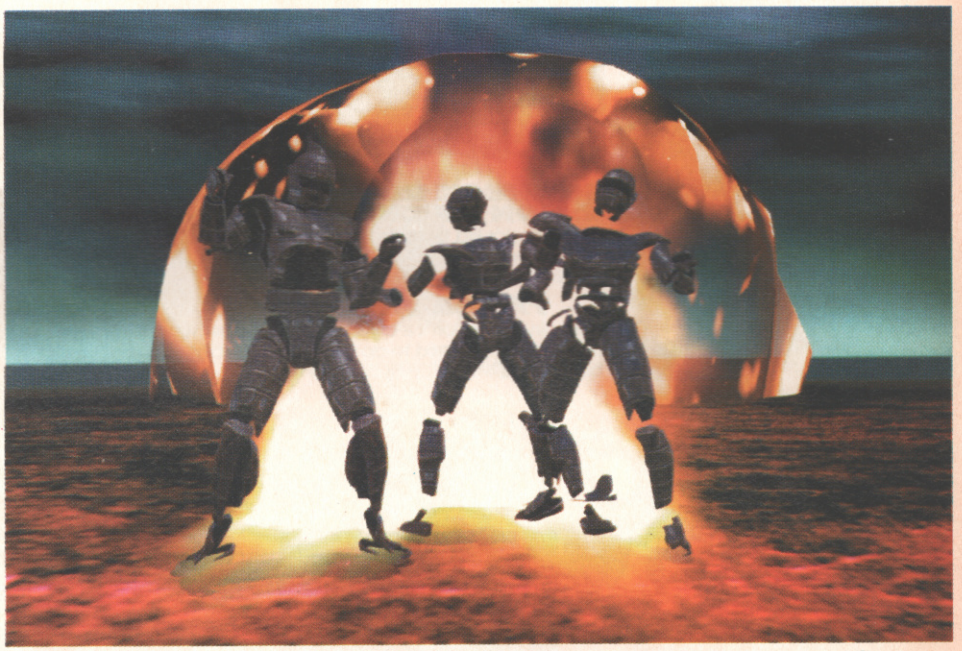
Developers like Acclaim, Argonaut, Electronic Arts, Gremlin, Ocean, Sega and US Gold have been developing their games using Silicon development systems for some time, and at a recent seminar held by the technology gurus at Silicon Graphics they were showing precisely why these development machines cost in the region of £17,000-£250,000 and over!

Despite the high price of a Silicon Graphics Workstation, the company claims that development times can be significantly reduced and so reduce a game's development costs; certainly the crux of the seminar seems to be 'with a Silicon Workstation you can do a year's work in a month'. So will this mean cheaper games? Well, it hasn't been the case so far seeing as all the major software houses have been using these systems for some time, so obviously reasons other than development costs must be why software prices still remain high.

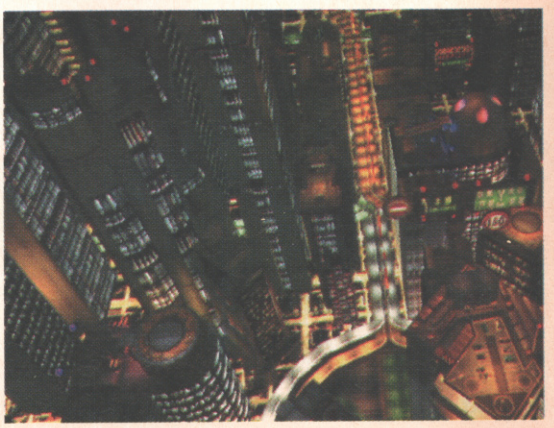
The sequel to Microcosm developed on Silicon gear was the game Silicon was showcasing at its seminar-come-sales-pitch. Named Scavenger 4, it looks incredible and one of the game's artists was quick to point out that he'd generated graphics for entire levels in under a day. So why, if the graphics take so little time to produce, aren't developers devoting more time to creating that all important gameplay? We want to see more than just fancy introductions clogging up disk space.

Certainly most software developers seem to be adopting the Silicon way of doing things - just look at Probe's Mortal Kombat and Sega's Virtua Racing, and this can only mean more realistic environments for future gameplayers.

Fancy graphics are easy to achieve with Silicon Graphics software. Apparently it doesn't take any experience to draw images like this!



From a developer's point of view, using a Silicon Graphics Workstation can halve a game's production times. For you, that should mean cheaper games - but sadly it doesn't.



Silicon Graphics Workstations are already common place in movies (like Jurassic Park) and are now also used by big name developers. Above is Sega's 'Motion Theatre' ride. Virtua Racing is another example.

NEW SEGA PORTABLE

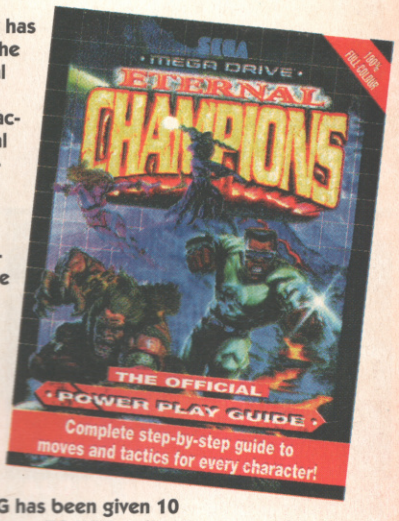
The Multi-Mega – one of Sega's best kept secrets – was revealed at the Las Vegas CES. Combining both a Mega Drive and Mega-CD in the same box it's also a wonderfully smart, compact, portable unit. The CDX has all the features of a normal CD portable, so you can now play your music CDs without needing a TV. The official release is April 1994, but there are only going to be limited stocks. It will retail for something in the region of £350, and will be bundled with a six-button joypad, an AC adaptor and a Mega-CD title as well as a Mega Drive title. The American version is to be called the CDX, so be careful you don't confuse the Multi-Mega with Datel's import cartridge thing for Mega-CDs, which is also called 'CDX'.

● CONTACT: SEGA 071-373 3000 ●

NEW MULTI-FORMAT CONSOLE AT LAST

We've heard - as we do - of a console made by Active Enterprises Ltd which is making the exciting claim of compatibility with Mega Drive, SNES, NES and CD-ROM games all in a single unit! It's designed to be portable so it's got a built in 3.2-inch screen and so, has a TV tuner option. That's all we know at the moment, and it probably infringes UK copyright laws so won't be on sale over here.

ETERNAL CHAMPIONS BOOKS FOR GRABS



Virgin Publishing has released the inevitable Eternal Champions tips book. Each character gets the usual look-in with profiles, and strategies for attack sequences and defensive procedures. In fact, the book claims to be the only place to find EVERY detail about the game fully explained. It'll set you back a reasonable £7.99 to purchase but CVG has been given 10 copies to give away. TO WIN: tell us how many female characters there are in the game. Send your entry to: 3am Eternal, CVG, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Alternatively, go buy a copy.

● CONTACT: VIRGIN PUBLISHING 081-968 7554 ●

PLANS FOR 3DO CONSOLE

You probably realise that 3DO stands for a specification rather than a machine, which is why different companies can make their own version of the system. Panasonic did the first, Sanyo is working on one, and now AT&T has decided to make one too.

ATARI'S JAGUAR DOES THE BIZZ STATE SIDE

Sales of Jaguar consoles in the USA appear to be reflecting scenes similar to the launch of the SNES in Japan. The lure of 64-bit power has caused a complete sell out of over 20,000 systems over the Christmas period (which would explain the lack of import machines over here), and at the recent CES the Jaguar pounced away with its share of awards from the American games magazines. These included 'best game system', and 'game of the show' for Tempest 2000. Bad news for 3DO eh?

While the Yanks continue to rant and rave about the console, it remains to be seen how us down-to-earth Brits will take to it when the system eventually gets released around Easter. Let's hope Atari gets a foot-hold before Sega's Saturn and Sony's PlayStation-X hit the scene by the close of the year, because 1995 is going to mean war.

● CONTACT: ATARI UK 0753 33344 ●

MEGA DRIVE ON-LINE

In a bid to bring further interactivity to games, AT&T of America is also launching the Edge16, a device which links Mega Drives over the phone line and allows you to talk to each other while you're playing. Compatible games will also be enhanceable with plug-in RAM cards for extra weapons and stuff. It sounds good in theory, and there's a lot of big name support for the system, but we can't help feeling that it's only really suited to head-to-head games and keep in mind that it's a lot cheaper to use a modem in the USA too.

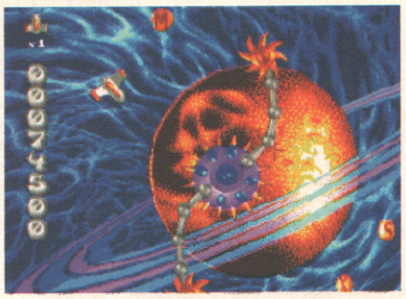
TDS TRADING SOLVES IMPORT 3DO PROBLEM

TDS has come up with a smart little gizmo which will allow you to finally connect your 3DO to a standard TV via an RGB SCART socket. What it does is transform the NTSC S-VHS signal to RGB. There are similar units around, but the TDS version is the only one to offer controls for fine tuning the picture as there are different tolerances between each 3DO machine. The unit also offers a red hue control to get correct skin tones with future MPEG applications like movies and games. So, now you can play the games the correct way in 60Hz and proper colour.

● CONTACT: TDS/MACHINE SHACK 081-769 6401 ●

STARDUST REVAMPED FOR A1200 AND CD32

The best graphics ever seen on an Amiga are about to get better when Stardust appears in May for A1200 and CD32 owners. Re-rendered in 256 colour VGA, the graphics in this shamelessly Asteroids based game will be more realistic than ever and destined for some sort of industry award. Extra levels, even better sound and of course improved speed, will be just some of the other enhancement. Yet the boys from Helsinki are also promising a few other startling surprises, but they ain't telling – yet.



● CONTACT: DAZE 071-328 2762 ●

BACK-PACK KICKS BASS FOR GAMES

Possibly the silliest thing shown at the recent CES show was the Aura Interactor. You strap this on your back and it vibrates in time with tunable bass frequencies from games. The idea is that you'll be able to feel on-screen explosions and enemy fire. Now that is S-A-D. At $80 it's also a right con and CVG reckons you can get the same rumbling effect by eating a large curry with the added sensation of smell too.

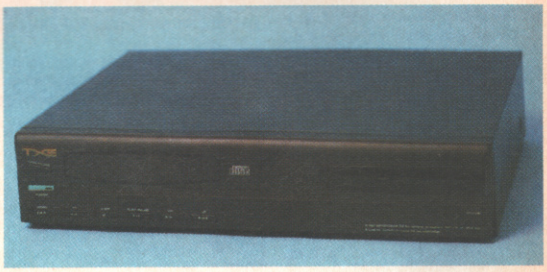
CD-i SPIES PETER GABRIEL WITH FMV

Thanks to the FMV plug-in, you and CD-I can now experience a new breed of music videos. Peter Gabriel's multimedia project, All About Us, features his seven best videos on just one disc, including titles which have won Grammy and MTV Video awards. These include 'Kiss That Frog' which is a Silicon Graphics affair, so you can imagine the sort of quality you get here. The disc also includes rare interview clips with the people behind the videos.

While comparable to Gabriel's similarly themed Xplora 1 disc for the Apple Macintosh, the CD-I version opens a new window for experiencing your music through more than just your speakers. Expect other musicians to follow suit.

● CONTACT: PHILIPS 081-689 4444 ●

NEW 32-BIT PC CONSOLE



Looking shamelessly like a CD-I, the TXE console from MSU Limited is a PC-based 32-bit RISC system incorporating a 25Mhz 386 CPU, 32-bit colour, a double speed drive and built-in FMV capability. The system isn't due out till later this year offering a few games like Robocod and Lotus, but as always, unless it gets some developer support it's going to have a hard time getting established. No price has been confirmed as yet.

MOST VISUALLY VIOLENT GAME?

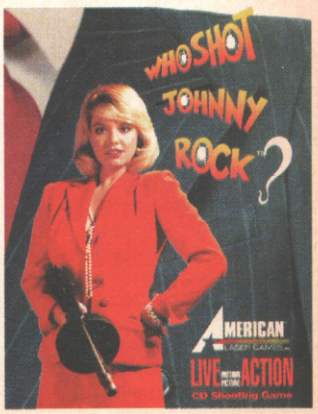
Merit software is soon to release a rather violent arcade/role playing PC CD-ROM named Harvester. Billed as containing 'the most horrific fight sequences ever' it offers spectacular ray-traced images in a game where you have to hunt out your fiancee's murderer.

Most of the game is set in a Lodge 'where you learn to kill' various creatures with different weapons. The idea is that you work your way up to killing humans. While morally dodgy, CVG knows that this is the sort of game you want, and so do we.

Harvester will offer some horrific fighting action with a variety of deadly weapons. Work your way up from fighting creatures to humans.

WHO SHOT JR?

Mad Dog MCree is almost impossible to play on the 3DO's joypad. But just released is the official plug-in gun which should help a lot. It'll be out in the States by March 30. Also, following on from its sad attempt at Mad Dog McCree on the 3DO, American Laser Games is releasing a similar game set in the gangstar-ridden Thirties. Here you'll have to seek out the killer of Johnny Rock in a similar style of gameplay.



CHARTS

February's the month of big sloppy wet kisses and all things lurve related, so let's see what computer and video games Joe Public has been going gooey over during this romantic period.

HMV ALL-FORMATS

1 SENSIBLE SOCCER
(Mega Drive, Sony)

One of the best games of all time, now Mega Drive owners understand what all the fuss was about from Amiga owners.

2 TURTLES – TOURNAMENT FIGHTERS
(Mega Drive/SNES, Konami)

3 ALONE IN THE DARK 2
(PC, Infogrames)

4 CANNON FODDER
(Amiga, Virgin)

5 TOE JAM & EARL 2
(Mega Drive, Sega)

6 DR ROBOTNIK'S MEAN BEAN MACHINE
(Mega Drive, Sega)

7 MORTAL KOMBAT
(All formats, Virgin)

8 ZOMBIES
(Mega Drive/SNES, Konami)

9 STAR TREK: JUDGEMENT RITES
(PC, Interplay)

10 FLASHBACK
(SNES, Sony)

HMV MEGA DRIVE

1 SENSIBLE SOCCER
(Sony)

2 TOE JAM & EARL 2
(Sega)

3 DR ROBOTNIK'S MEAN BEAN MACHINE
(Sega)

Dr Robotnik's puzzler is a great change from the usual shoot-'em-up.

4 TURTLES-TOURNAMENT FIGHTERS
(Konami)

5 ZOMBIES
(Konami)

6 DRAGON'S REVENGE
(Tengen)

7 ALADDIN
(Sega)

8 SONIC SPINBALL
(Sega)

9 STREETFIGHTER II SCE
(Sega)

10 MORTAL KOMBAT
(Acclaim)

HMV SNES

1 TURTLES – TOURNAMENT FIGHTERS
(Konami)

2 ALADDIN
(Nintendo)

3 FLASHBACK
(Sony)

4 MARIO ALL STARS
(Nintendo)

Turtles is one of the best Streetfighter II ripoffs we've seen.

5 STREETFIGHTER II TURBO
(Nintendo)

6 TOP GEAR 2
(Kemco)

7 MAJOR TITLE
(Kiss UK)

8 MORTAL KOMBAT
(Acclaim)

9 SUPER MARIO KART
(Nintendo)

10 NIGEL MANSELL
(Nintendo)

HMV AMIGA

1 CANNON FODDER
(Virgin)

2 MORTAL KOMBAT
(Virgin)

3 WINTER OLYMPICS
(US Gold)

4 JURASSIC PARK
(Ocean)

Will we ever see an Amiga number one that isn't from Sensible?

5 FRONTIER – ELITE 2
(Gametek)

6 PREMIER MANAGER 2
(Gremlin)

7 ZOOL 2
(Gremlin)

8 ALIEN BREED 2
(Team 17)

9 F117A NIGHT HAWK
(MicroProse)

10 F1
(Domark)

HMV PC

1 ALONE IN THE DARK 2
(Infogrames)

2 STAR TREK: JUDGEMENT RITES
(Interplay)

3 T.F.X.
(Ocean)

4 FRONTIER-ELITE 2
(Ocean)

We love this arcade adventure and judging by its impressive performance in the all-formats chart, so do you.

5 REBEL ASSAULT (CD-ROM)
(US Gold)

6 SAM AND MAX
(US Gold)

7 PREMIER MANAGER 2
(Gremlin)

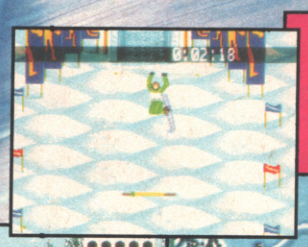
8 INDY CAR RACING
(Virgin)

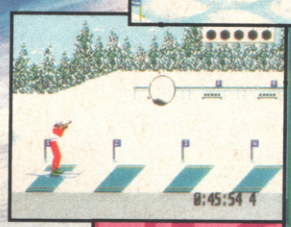
9 SUBWAR 2050
(MicroProse)

10 WINTER OLYMPICS
(US Gold)

THE IC
NORGE
Lillehammer'94
Winter
OLYMPICS
This Winter's hottest game.

E AGE





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AND PC CD-ROM.

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And it's going to wipe out everything in its path.
You're up against the world's greatest winter sportsmen in a race of mammoth speeds. Competing in ten spectacular snow–capped events, you'll need every last ounce of strength, skill and staying power to beat the rest and tame the piste.
Breathe deep...muster your reserves... focus yourself ...
then **GO GO GO FOR GOLD !**
Just remember one thing: never look back.
Winter Olympics. It's hot.

Screen shots from a selection of available formats (see above)

U.S. GOLD®

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LAS VEGAS REPORT – NINTENDO CES

Vegas – home to the biggest cars, stars and hotels in the world, and now it's host to some of the 'biggest' computer games, consoles and silicon junkies on the planet at the 1994 Computer Entertainment Show. But the show wouldn't be complete if CVG wasn't there to bring you all the info about the new releases for '94. And no show would be worth attending unless the Big Nin' was there also to keep the punters happy, and so Las Vegas is as ready as anyone else to say "Viva Nintendo..."

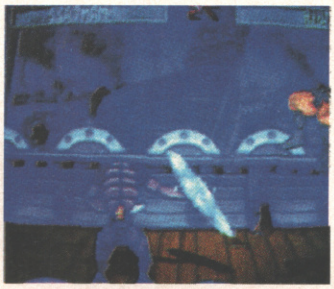
The Japanese giant has been out in force at the CES, in its own Ninimitable way. Apart from billions of new games it has filled the space with giant screens and arcade podiums. Brand new SFX chip games have been playing constantly, plus also on show is the first game to feature the SFX 2 chip, Stunt Race FX. But the subject on everyone's lips has to be the joint console venture between Nintendo and Silicon Graphics – Project Reality, but the only thing on show is a couple of Onyx Reality Engine 2's (the giant quarter-of-a-million-pound development system that Silicon Graphics uses to produce its film graphics). Despite this, the two companies still claim they'll have demo machines this year and that the whole kaboodle will retail for under $250. Well, we'll just have to sit and wait, the following games are what we will be able to see on the shelves in '94 though...

STUNTRACE FX

There's no denying that the SFX 2 game by Argonaut looks absolutely stunning. It features four flexible cars that can change shape to squeeze in-between obstacles and 20 different tracks. The simultaneous two-player option works a treat and the way the car comes apart and blows to pieces is fab, but as racing games go it'll be pipped to the post by Virtua Racing.

TIME KILLERS

Supposedly the most violent video game this side of the Bronx. Well not if Mortal Kombat II's got anything to do with it (check out last issue)! You know the score, the bloods on the door, but not in the Nintendo version. Eight Warriors from the past, present and future battle in a timeless arena to win the prize of immortality. Totally brutal war cries complete the carnage.



IMPOSSIBLE MISSION 2025

Massive robot madness as MicroProse puts you control of a high armoured killing droid sent in to penetrate a derelict tower block and defeat the renegade rogue droid. Puzzles, traps and lashings of violence. A sure winner!

KICK OFF 3

More scorching footy news. Anco's reply to Goal! is being kept a top secret and only a video of the game has been running at the show, but we've managed to find out that Kick Off 3 will be the most accurate footy sim around on the SNES, because players will have the chance to use any one of 30 spectacular finishing moves to score goals with, like trick overhead shots and other such spectacular set pieces.

CITADEL

Grab hold of a 30-foot tall polygon-based robot and knock 12 bells out of like kinds! Yet another SFX chip-based game from the Argonaut stable. You can change into a land cruiser, walker, a jet or an impregnable hard shield. This really looks monster!

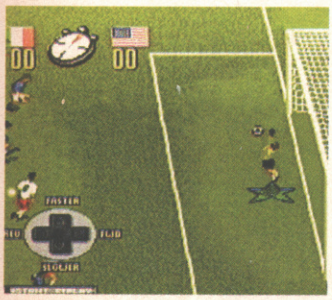
TURN AND BURN

Strap into an F-14 Tomcat and screech across the impressive Mode 7 horizons in dogfights to the death with enemy MiG attack craft. Also plan infa-red night raids on enemy strongholds. Could be the best flight sim the SNES has seen.

RISE OF THE ROBOTS

You've seen pictures of the incredible ray traced PC version in an earlier preview, but now Mirage's 'bots are coming to the SNES. Go into combat with the mutant mad service droids of a research station and experience some of the most amazing 3D contoured graphics around!

CHAMPIONS WORLD CLASS SOCCER

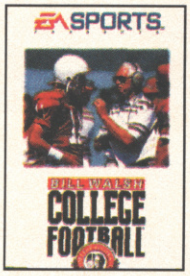


Acclaim promises fully interactive goalies, bicycle kicks and sliding tackles as just a few of the features in this would-be FIFA beater! Smart graphics and great presentation. It must make a play for the footballing top slot, unless EA's beauty gets there first!

ELECTRONIC ARTS '94 PREVIEWS

FIFA

EA has been showing off the SNES version of the Mega Drive hit and get this, it's just as good, if not better, with a few more options to boot! Most notable though is a power bar that appears when you're just about to shoot, so that you can gauge the power of your shot and get even more control over the sprightly sprite's football skills.

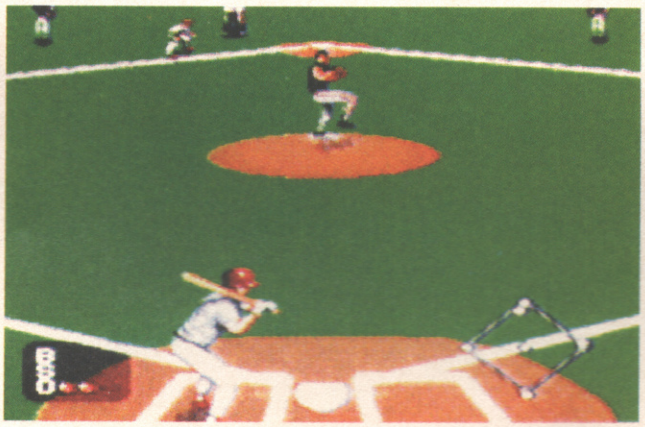


BILL WALSH COLLEGE FOOTBALL

If you can't tell your NFL from your CLF then you won't mind trading in your John Madden for Bill Walsh. This is College football with 48 teams, cheerleaders, fight songs and play off tournaments. Plus it's 4-Way Play compatible!

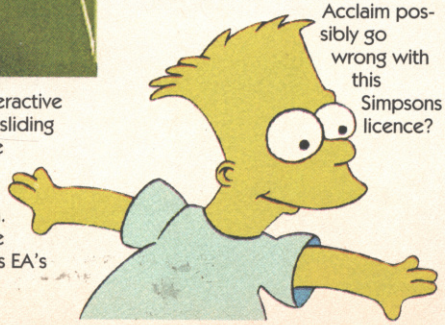
MLBPA BASEBALL

Electronic Arts finally turns its hand to baseball, and with its track record you can't knock it. Play through an entire 162 game season and compile stats for every player in the league.



THE SIMPSONS: VIRTUAL BART

Dive head first into the world of virtual reality with Bart Simpson. Battle huge monsters in Mode 7 and once again take on fab pseudo characters like Dino-Bart, a gangley dinosaur, and the free wheelin', motor mad Doomsday-Bart! Can Acclaim possibly go wrong with this Simpsons licence?



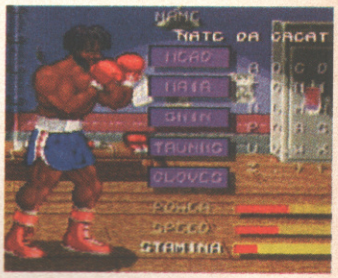
BATTLE BLAZE

Top beasty beat-'em-up action from American Sammy Corp! Well actually it's a bit simplistic. Not so many moves and not too many specials, but lots of characters to choose from and some nice effects. An essential buy – not.

WINTER EXTREME - SKIING AND SNOWBOARDING

Take on the challenge of the Winter Olympians and compete in two different snowbound sports. Both events manage to utilise the SNES' Mode 7 to the utmost with speedy scrolling and surprisingly realistic snow sport effects.

RIDDICK BOWE BOXING



Some of the biggest sprites you've ever seen! Custom build your own heavyweight with speed, power etc, and fight through the top ranks of the world's best fighters. Tons of punches and meaty sounds, you can save up to seven boxers too.

CHOPLIFTER 3

The AH90 Comanche attack 'copter is back! In the third of the series you can literally destroy everything on the screen with napalm, homing missiles, cluster bombs and tactical nuclear weapons!

WCW SUPERBRAWL WRESTLING

Yet another button bashing lycra and wrestling feast of a game, this time from the WCW. Includes digitised images and sounds, 50 moves and tag team options.

ZOOL

Zool completes the triumvirate of platform stars alongside Sonic and Mario, and Gametek is the company that is going to bring the Amiga's premiere platformer to the SNES. Better graphics, better sound and better all round than its computer counterparts.

IN THE HUNT

Stunning looking and just as gut wrenching to play! Patrol the deep sea waters in a fleet of hi-tech submarines and blast all that quivers! Simultaneous two-player action is HOT!

UNDERCOVER COPS

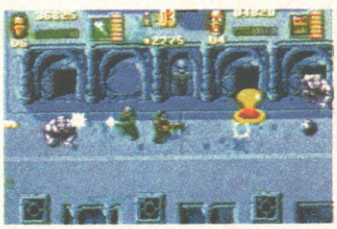
More popular arcade fare, but not too much originality. Choose your fighter and smash the baddies.

You've seen it before, but not quite as pretty as this.

DOOMSDAY WARRIOR

Hack and slash, bash and dash! Nice scrolling backdrops and plenty of fisticuff action. Specials are a bit thin on the ground, but worth a look, if a little brief!

SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE



SNES version of the brilliant Amiga game Chaos Engine. Two mercenaries can team up together to solve the puzzle of the Engine in this rapid shoot-'em-up. Fast and furious with a light puzzle element. Full of secret locations.

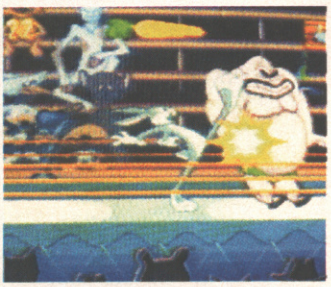
STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

A Trekkie treat from Spectrum Holobyte. Engage in space combat or explore strange new planets and save the future of the Federation.

SECRET OF MANA

Incredible sequel to the phenomenally successful Zelda game. Just as classy but even more effects, twists and turns.

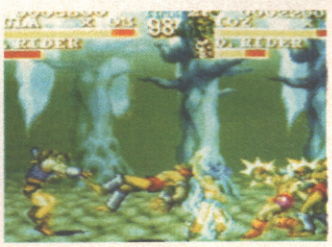
BUGS BUNNY RAMPAGE



Sun Corporation might have made crap games in the past, but things are definitely getting better. And Bugs Bunny Rampage is certainly a good example, the cartoon graphics are out of this world. Flan flinging, carrot exploding and often rib-ticklingly good.

PIRATES OF DARK WATER

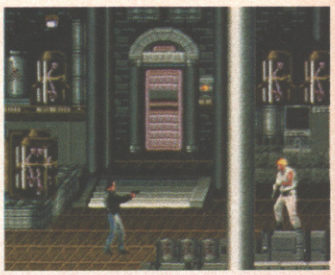
Simultaneous two player cartoon beat 'em up based on the TV series. Choose one of three characters with special abilities and fist your way through a sea of ruthless pirates - ahharrr!



FATAL FURY 2

Little improved beat-'em-up that's not a patch on Turtles or any Streetfighter.

STEVEN SEGAL



Digitised actors run amok in Hollywood and there's only one man for the job of sorting them out, and that's you - as Mr Segal, of course! Nice martial arts animation action, probably some of the best digitised sprite graphics seen, courtesy of Teckmagik.

SUPER GODZILLA

Giant Jap rubber dinos stalk the metropolis, not unlike King Of The Monsters, but in a SF2 scenario. Three-headed dragons and, of course, Godzillas that breathe fire, which can only mean one thing if you get in the way – death. Last one left standing's the winner.

JAMMIT

Virgin's street-wise one-on-one basketball offering for the Nineties. Boys against boys, girls against girls and great close-up animations of all the star dunkers.

From Michaelangelo's Fantasy World...

to Donatello's Futuristic City, the Turtles transcend time through to another dimension, in this, the ultimate confrontational fighting game.

TEENAGE MUTANT HERO TURTLES

TOURNAMENT FIGHTERS

SEGA MEGA DRIVE

SUPER NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

KONAMI

Konami (UK) Limited Television House 269 Field End Road Eastcote Middlesex HA4 9LS

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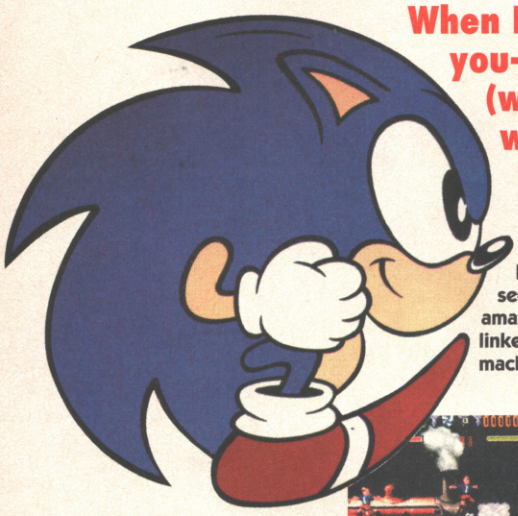
LAS VEGAS REPORT – SEGA ✦ CES ✦

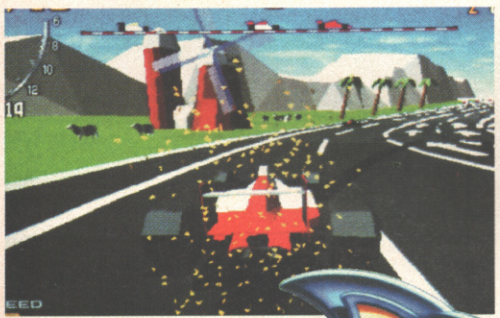


When Nintendo come to town, it goes without saying that you-know-who is going to be right there next to them (we daren't say behind them). CVG play and probe with everything Sega

In Las Vegas they do things big. Finding your hotel room, for example, among the 3,000 other is a task in itself, and the Vegas Computer Entertainment Show makes similar events in Britain look piffling, and subsequently every major player is here. The other half of the Japanese duopoly (we're talking Sega here, just in case you haven't read the previous pages on Nintendo) is here in a bid to make sure it remains the other big player in the market. Sega is the second occupant of a huge Big Top set up in the middle of the show, and the star attraction is its amazing Virtua arcade games. One bank has been devoted to no less than five full-sized racing cars linked to Virtua Racing, while another portion holds the star of the show, an arcade Virtua Fighting machine! But enough of this introduction, here's a blow-by-blow account of the whole shebang...

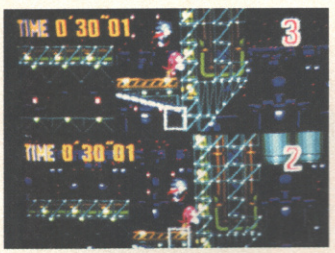
VIRTUA RACING

Anyone that doesn't know that Virtua Racing is completely nappy soaking by now must be the son of a thousand baboon fathers! In a show with little ground breaking to offer, most are agreed that this cart has stolen the show! The new SVP chip has given the Mega Drive something to brag about. The game is an incredible achievement on the Mega Drive and has four fantastic camera angles with which to watch the action and a split screen feature. (Preview page 100.)



HURRICANES

Not at all unlike Soccer Kid in principle, Hurricanes is another popular cartoon series to spawn a video-game. The underdog football team is challenged to a match by arch enemy Stavros Garkos to determine the best team in the world, but it has to get to the stadium first! The soccer platformer lets you choose from the hot shot Hurricane team players and use their footy skills and brilliant graphics to defeat Stavros.



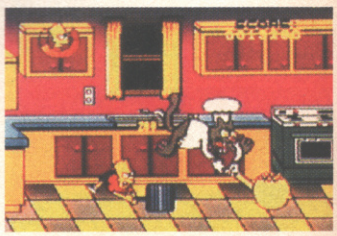
SONIC 3!

One of the biggest surprises at the show was Sonic 3. Why? Because it was absolutely fantastic! Completely new levels, a new character, Knuckles (a kind of red version of Sonic!), 3D bonus levels and a proper simultaneous two-player option. In one-player mode Sonic and Tails are submerged underground, catapulted around a colourful anti-gravity carnival and nearly frozen in Arctic wasteland. In split screen, two player mode, there are even more new levels and a new time challenge where players race against each other to the end of a level against the clock. But why are you wasting your time reading this mere snippet when the full review is on page 34.

SUB-TERRANIA

Mind-blowing graphics as you take control of an experimental attack fighter on an 'offworld' satellite. Fly through gorgeous locations, such as crystal caverns, and battle amazing droids that can give as good as they get - almost!

THE SIMPSONS: BART'S NIGHTMARE



From what we can see this is exactly the same as the fabulous SNES version. Join Bart in his nightmares and travel to strange lands inhabited by weird and wonderful beasts, like Homer Kong and the Temple Of Maggie. You can even get trapped in a wacky flick of the Itchy and Scratchy Show. The cartoon graphics are perfect and the varying game styles fun and seem endless.

BUBBA 'N' STIX

Original platform games? Never! But you'll be surprised. Bubba is a thick truck driver whose best friend is a stick, an alien stick! The gormless goat has to use the stick as a baseball bat, snooker cue and javelin to get through scores of brain-teasing puzzles and over 100 obstacles to get back to Earth. (Bubba are his pal previewed in full on page 97)!

SPEED RACER

Accolade's very graphic racing game based on the Manga-styled American cartoon of the same name. Each of the 42 legs of the race is based on an episode of the show like Valley Of Destruction, Danger Pass and Snake Track which gives you some idea of the state of racing play! Great graphics and some nice racing action.

BRET HULL

This ice hockey game features digitised players and instant replay options. There's also a chance to train players up and they can improve on such skills as stick handling, skating, shooting and aggressiveness.

RAGE IN THE CAGE

Acclaim has managed to capture 20 beef monsters to battle it out with headbutts, eye-gouging and chair breaking no-holds barred wrestling mayhem! The WWF stars have been captured in full motion video and digitised into the game and put inside the cage.

HIGH SEAS HAVOC

Jap-styled cartoon graphics and huge guardian monsters that are as cute as hell! Detail on the sprites is amazing, but it's really just another hack-and-slash affair.

JIM POWER

The old Amiga platform shooter, but it's been given a clean up with improved graphics and sound. Supplied with the game is a pair of 3D glasses, so you can enjoy the fun multidimensionaly!

SKITCHIN'

Previewed last month, Electronic Arts' skating alternative to Road Rash – Skitchin' – centres around you hitching rides with passing cars by grabbing their bumpers and being pulled along on your roller skates. Race against the computer or a mate and try and screech across the finishing line before anyone else. You'll have to watch out for exploding tyres, dropped weapons, ramps and on-coming trucks to stay ahead.

MUTANT LEAGUE HOCKEY

It seems traditional now for EA to release a Mutant version of one of its

games. No prizes for guessing that this was based on the NHL games! The best athletes in the galaxy smash each other up while avoiding hazards in the arena, like gaping holes, fires and sharks! Oh what larks!

PINK GOES TO HOLLYWOOD

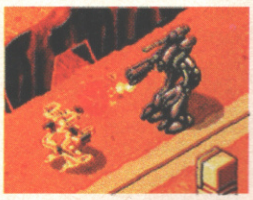
Our panther pal stumbles on to one of Inspector Clouseau's film sets and the detective gives chase through 12 different film stages. Once again gameplay leans heavily on brilliant bursts of animation and slapstick humour.

SYLVESTER AND TWEETY CAGEY CAPERS

Amazing animations and sampled voices that come straight out of the cartoons. The huge sprites and cartoon graphics hide some hilarious gameplay as the two get into all sorts of trouble with the Warner Bros characters.

BATTLETECH

Forty-ton battle droids scrap to the death to gain control of distant worlds. Fight on familiar terrain to gain control of planets or go up against a friend and his armour-plated machine, the choice is yours.



BEAUTY AND THE BEAST – ROAR OF THE BEAST

The action adventure version of Disney's classic film. Dodge carnivorous wolves in the snow-laden forests and use the enchanted servants to protect the castle from the villagers. Average graphics and not a lot of gameplay. Aladdin it is not!

PIRATES OF DARK WATER

Cast off with the Mega Drive version of the cartoon-based cart in search of fame and the Treasures Of Rule. Choose between, the prince apparent, or Ioz, a cunning sage and battle the pirates of evil Lord Bloth.

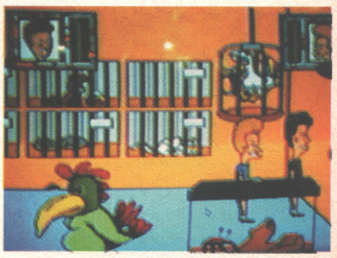
HIT THE ICE

Rattle your bones and strap on the padding for one of the most physical ice hockey games around. With the meanest checks and slap-shots outside of the Mutant League and a special power puck blast shot the competition in the ice hockey cart arena is warming up!

RAINBOW ISLANDS

Jumping on platforms and casting rainbows may not sound like much fun, but this game is one of the most addictive in history. Collect multiple rainbows and different treasures and progress over loads of themed levels past their guardian keepers. Toy world, Robot world and loads more stand in your way to getting over the rainbow.

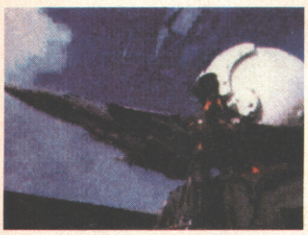
BEAVIS AND BUTT-HEAD



The MTV cult metal heads inevitably get a video game to call their own courtesy of Viacom. None of the guys' particularly sick humour sticks out in the game, but the look and feel of it is pretty close to the cartoon series. Playability? From Viacom? Whadda you think?

COULD I INTEREST YOU IN A MEGA-CD TITLE SIR?

Well if you are going to buy one, or you're the proud or pleased recipient of a Mega-CD (and if you're not then you're an ungrateful git – 'gift horse in the mouth' and all that) then what you'll want in 1994 is plenty of new titles. Well these are some of the games on show at the Vegas Show...



TOMCAT ALLEY

Top software is at last coming out for Sega's games-thirsty machine. The digitised video footage is the first to be full screen on the Mega CD. Jump into the cockpit of a fully armed Tomcat, you get the choice of being navigator or missiles expert. Dogfight through seven missions that are different every time. The movie footage was actually directed by Sam Nicholson who was responsible for the Star Trek movie.

PRIZE FIGHTER

A first-person perspective video beat-'em-up directed by Ron Stein, the fight choreographer responsible for Rocky III and Raging Bull. Real boxers take real punches and you can see all the action as the screen rocks and shakes as you get hit. Jab, weave, upper-cut and hook. At last Mega-CD technology put to some good use!

DOUBLE SWITCH

Famous stars come fast and furious in this Night Trap style adventure. Actually shot on a Hollywood sound stage with appearances from Corey 'Lost Boys' Haim and Debbie Harry.

The action's set in a creepy Edwardian mansion and players must find scores of secret rooms, traps and unravel the mysteries of the mansion by flicking between the digitised video footage and unravelling the cryptic clues given by the actors.

JURASSIC PARK

Just about every format Jurassic Park has appeared on has provided a different styled game and Sega's Mega-CD version's no different. The dinosaurs and special effects have been created by Silicon Graphics, the original movie's dino creators. Players must negotiate the park and get off the island. The amazing Q sound effects complete the atmospheric gameplay.

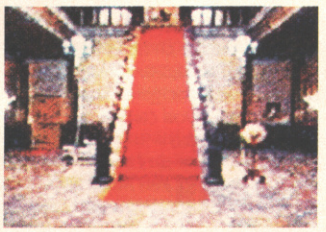
DRAGONS LAIR

Almost arcade perfect representation of the stunning cartoon adventure. Nothing's improved on the gameplay front, but the animations are still as impressive today as when the original laser disc arcade game was introduced. Impress your gran and perhaps have a laugh with Readysoft's Mega-CD version.

MANSION OF HIDDEN SOULS

A kind of Seventh Guest adventure as you explore a strange mansion and encounter all its creepy inhabitants. Featuring digitised video footage in a window larger than that used in Night Trap but even more grainy.

DUNE 2



Virgin has taken this version directly from the PC CD-ROM game, but the problem is that this strategy game about the story of the Battle for Arrakis is looking pretty dated now. The intros and video footage are pretty impressive, plus some of the landscape scrolling is breathtaking (check out our early review of the game in our January issue).

DRACULA UNLEASHED

A large video footage window opens you up to the world of Dracula. The caped night creeper has been brought back to life and it's your job to unmask him before time runs out. Quite Gothic at times with a heavy element of mystery and suspense.

GROUND ZERO, TEXAS

Aliens have invaded and landed in small town America, Sonic knows why! Another patented TruVideo adventure which basically boils down to a Mad Dog McCree video shoot-'em-up! If you want to know more then scroll to page 38.

EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

Console owners finally get a taste of what the computer buffs have been raving over for years, fantasy role playing adventure games! Eye Of The Beholder was the modern day Dungeon Master when it was released, and is the adventure that every other computer RPG tries to beat. Some have since, but with new graphics and atmospheric CD sound, this will be a classic.

AMIGA

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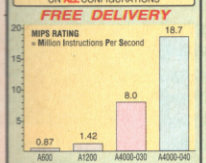

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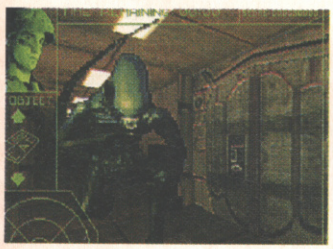
LAS VEGAS REPORT – JAGUAR CES

Where better for Atari to shout and holler about its 64-bit super console than the Vegas Computer Entertainment Show...

The Atari stand, despite its formidable new machine, seemed to have been relegated to a stand on the far side of the arena –hardly the prime position it was no doubt hoping for to sell its new wonder machine! As you might expect, though, visitors to CES went hunting for a glimpse of the Jaguar, and they weren't disappointed once they found it. Software is sparse at present; however, thanks to some clever marketing and the employment of several helpful young Jaguar ladies, we managed to secure all this fine information on all the best forthcoming 64-bit games! The Jaguar has managed to pick up four out of five awards at the CES, given out by the American press, among which were Best Console and Best Game (Cybermorph). Take a look here and see what else is on the way.

ALIEN VS PREDATOR

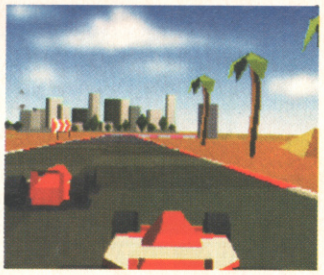
This has come a long way since the early development pics were shown to the press. Players select either the Alien, the Predator or a Space Marine and skulk around 3D rendered tunnels and mazes getting to grips with digitised monsters in the texture mapped locations. The Alien can use its tail and razor-sharp jaws



to fight with. The Predator uses sophisticated weaponry like infrared night vision to seek out its victims while the poor old Marine has to rely on the tried-and-tested machine-gun and computer equipment to hunt the others down. The camera even races along the corridors to recreate the high tension chase sequences in the Alien movie. (Want to read more about this sexy new title? Turn to our in-depth preview on page 24.)

CHEQUERED FLAG 2

Touted as Virtua Racing on the



Jaguar and just about finished you can't fail to be impressed by its smart swish looks and speedy frame rate.What with the Mega Drive version of Virtua being so incredible, Chequered Flag 2's got to have the gameplay to match the graphics if it wants to be a real contender and not just a high-end also-ran.

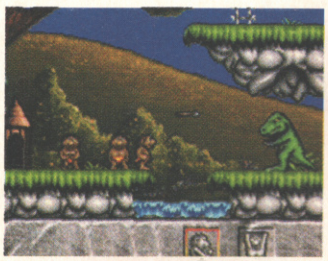
CRESCENT GALAXY

Simply a bog standard shoot-'em-up with flashy ray-traced graphics. Not even the stunning backgrounds and massive pseudo-3D guardians

can lift this one above the ground. Just your average run-of-the-mill shooter I'm afraid, that admittedly attempts to show off what the Atari Jaguar is capable of graphically.

EVOLUTION: DINO DUDES

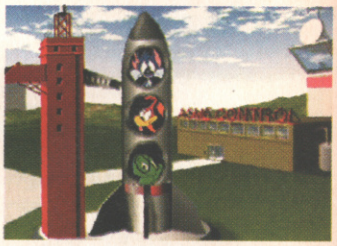
The Jaguar needs this version of Humans like it needs 50,000 volts



passed across its 32-bit bus! Move the cavemen from one end of the screen to the other by balancing them on top of each other and using various objects that they find lying around. This is not what the Jaguar was created for, Atari – let's not let it happen again, eh?

TINY TOON ADVENTURES

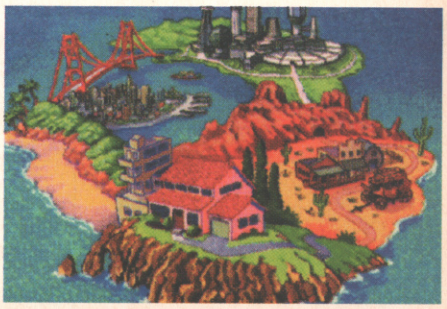
Specially enhanced version of the Konami classic with



more animation and fabulous sound. There might even be some cartoons included in the game to reward players who have done well. But the amount of colours (16 million of them!) and graphics speak for themselves.

CLUB DRIVE

Set off around the globe on a Sunday drive like no other you've experienced before! A cross between Hard Drivin' and Micro Machines, all programmed with 3D polygon graphics. Race around carpets and breakfast tabletops, avoiding the marmalade (thin cut of course).



3DO ✦ CES ✦

The CES has to be a golden, nay, platinum opportunity to show off the 3DO and fulfil the promises of 'quality games' for the new machine...

Trip Hawkins' 3DO Company obviously sees the CES as an excellent platform to announce its debut titles for the 3DO. There are no less than 143 new games in production for the machine, and there are scores of companies like Bullfrog, Psygnosis and Interplay signing up to produce games, which has to be good news for 3DO; certainly everyone was expecting it to be a major player from the word go. Rumours are rife about 3DO signing up Capcom to produce games for the machine; certainly if anything's going to make the 3DO a worthy purchase then an arcade perfect conversion of Streetfighter 3 has to be it! So here's an insight into what you can expect to see games-wise when the machine's launched over here...

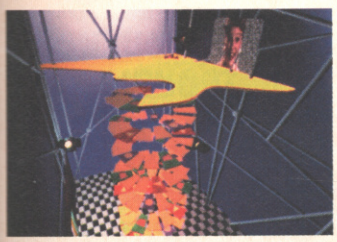
JURASSIC PARK

The 3DO Jurassic Park is looking as good, if not better, than its cross format cousins. Varying gameplay styles, from Operation Wolf to normal racing and great attention to detail!

SHOCK WAVE

Pilot a spacecraft over texture-mapped landscapes while you take on 3D fighters in photo-realistic combat. Hollywood script writers, actors and engineers have managed to create incredible film-like graphics and Dolby sound. Experience real video and radio broadcasts from other pilots as they interact with you in the game.

TWISTED

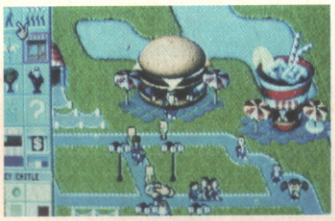


A crazy game show pits you against six weird opponents. There's thousands of puzzles and tons of video footage to keep you coming back for more.

ROAD RASH

Reworked from the Sega version, Road Rash uses actual film footage. The way scenery speeds past you and the rate the screen updates is unbelievable, but when the bike moves to the edge of the screen it tends to 'float' in the air.

THEME PARK



EA's PC masterpiece-to-be (programmed by Bullfrog) where you have to construct, run and maintain your own theme park. With the 3DO version you can click on the people as they enter an attraction and see the rides through their eyes! WOW!

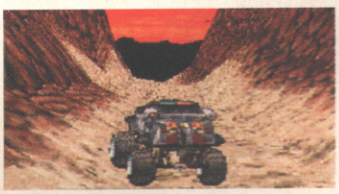
DEMOLITION MAN

Virgin brings this Operation Wolf-style film licence to 3DO,. Sylvester Stallone and Wesley Snipes actually shot extra footage especially for the game, so expect something a little different to the normal movie tie-in.

TOTAL ECLIPSE

Crystal Dynamix products are light years ahead of most of the others and this top-rated shoot-'em-up is a fine example of the 3DO's potential for gorgeous, playable releases. 20 levels, synthesised actors and lasers galore!

ORION OFF ROAD

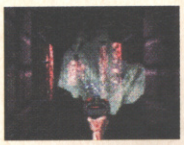


Another Crystal Dynamix game in which you play a bounty hunter on the tail of terrorists. Race against the computer in split screen mode and blast the bad guys. This game hosts some of the most impressive texture-mapped surfaces ever seen!

MEGA RACE

Crash And Burn was a bit of a dud, but Mega Race is looking set to put matters right. Race through a futuristic metropolis in head-to-head competition or against one of five computer drivers while navigating past 3D objects blasting each other to bits.

ESCAPE FROM MONSTER MANOR



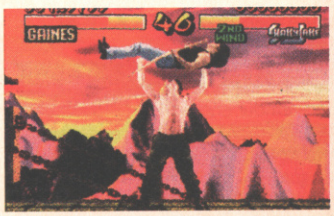
Collect the pieces of a scattered talisman and rid the world of various ghoulies! The special effects are truly film-like with transparent spooks and clay animated zombies. A real shocker!

DRAXON'S REVENGE

Fast game action (yes the 3DO can do it!) and rockin' soundtracks to send you to the edge. Smooth, shaded polygon graphics, movie clips and full speech keep you firmly in on the shoot-'em-up action.

WAY OF THE WARRIOR

Photorealism takes another step forward with 3DO's Kombat-inspired beat-'em-up. Ten massive, digitised



characters with hundreds of moves and two 3D rendered bosses for the real masters among you.

LAS VEGAS REPORT - HANDHELDS

✦ CES ✦

You don't need a Mega Drive or SNES to enjoy decent carts, as the new handheld releases at the CES only go to prove...

Handheld users have little to worry about this year, apart from Lynx owners that is. We haven't been able to find one single Lynx product on display at the show. Despite Atari heralding the arrival of the Jaguar, it seems to have forgotten about its handheld counterpart. However, if your main machine is a Game Boy/Gear, or it's simply what you play while you're 'on the move', then feast your eyes on what is only a selection of titles coming your way in '94...

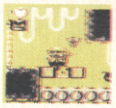
GAME BOY

DAFFY DUCK

Daffy, alias Duck Dodgers, comes up against Marvin the Martian and has to stop him destroying Earth because it spoils his view of Venus! The daft duck's got a little help from his shrinking raygun, but he really needs you on his side to pull it off!

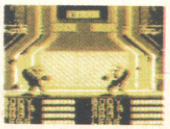
WARIO LAND 3

If this were a Mario game it would be the best ever, but as the evil Wario it just outstrips the competition for best handheld platformer ever. Loads of moves and secret rooms as you hunt for treasure with big, clear sprites and stunning gameplay.



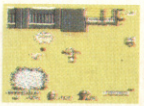
METAL MASTERS

Years old beat-'em-up that first turned up on the Amiga. Two giant robots bash it out in an arena for cash with you at the controls. Buy better weapons and armour and make it to the top of the league.



JURASSIC PARK

A simple conversion from the SNES title. The gameplay's the same, as you collect eggs from inside the park and try to escape through the electrified compounds. Clear graphics that work well.

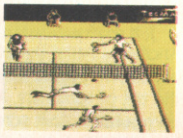


BATMAN: THE ANIMATED SERIES

Based on the current cartoon series, and in the same graphical style. A basic platform game that just pips the now ageing Game Boy Batman game to the post.

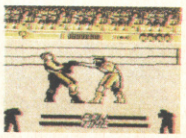
ANDRE AGASSI TENNIS

Tennis hasn't done well on the Game Boy, and the mono screen doesn't help. In contrast Andre is quite smart and apart from normal one-on-one you can also play doubles!



MUHAMMAD ALI BOXING

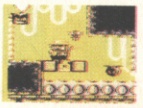
As any fight fan knows it takes more than a couple of jabs and a few moves in your arsenal to make a top beat-'em-up and I'm afraid The Boy's just not up to it! The presentation is quite clear but it's simply not going to be 'The Greatest'.



GAME GEAR

CRASH DUMMIES

Slapstick action as the plastic crash droids get up to their tricks on the Gear. The colours and detail are great and far superior to the Game Boy version, so check it out.



BART VS THE WORLD

The Simpson family return with more crazy stunts and weird and wonderful characters.

T2: JUDGEMENT DAY

You play Arnie in a heavy platform romp where you have a variety of weapons to battle the T1000 (some nice liquid versions) with.

COLUMNS 3

The Mega Drive version plays with five human opponents, but here you're limited by the size of the screen. The game plays the same and so are most of the features.

SCRATCH GOLF

Try your best to negotiate bunkers, trees, divots and water on the golf water to get your birdie. Possibly one of the best golfing games on any handheld.

JURASSIC PARK

Five gigantic levels to explore, with jungles, swamps, towering cliffs, fierce volcanoes and wild dinosaur chases. Great graphics, but lacks the sound of the 16-bit versions.

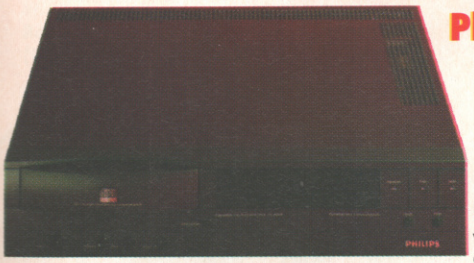
DESERT SPEED TRAP

Road Runner and Wile E Coyote scorch across the desert and sun kissed highways in a race to the finish. Keep the bird away from the furry rascal and top up on seed to stay in the race.

DEEP DUCK TROUBLE

More Disney platform fun. Uncle Scrooge McDuck has contracted a mysterious curse from an ancient pendant. Now, with only Donald to help you, you must return the pendant to whence it came to lift the spell.

CD-i ✦ CES ✦



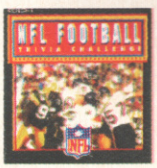
Philips is very proud of its contender in the burgeoning new hardware market, and where better to show of some early titles for the CD-i than the CES...

According to Philips, it has now sold 200,000 CD-i players worldwide, and with a more impressive new joypad replacing the infrared controller, a light gun and its stunning Digital Video Cartridge, the company is resembling more of a major contender in the CD market. From what we've managed to glean from the show, CD-i's products are way ahead of any of its CD competitors. On equivalent titles such as Mad Dog and other video-style games, Philips' rivals are lacking in the picture and sound quality fronts. The company has also signed up film giant MGM, who join Paramount, as one of the ever growing list of movie producers bringing out CD films for the machine. Also announced is a new carousel player, the Magnanavox, that allows up to five CDs to be played, one after another, thus eliminating the problem of CD movies coming on two discs and having to be swapped half way through a feature. But enough of this cinematic talk, let's get back to what this magazine's about, games...

VOYEUR

Take on the big knobs in the seats of power as you spy on the dodgy presidential candidate, Reed Hawke. It's up to you to monitor Hawke's shady goings on with the aid of special spy cameras. Some of the screens are quite steamy and make Night Trap look like an episode of Emmerdale. (Reviewed in full last issue - 87%)

NFL FOOTBALL TRIVIA CHALLENGE



No not another American football sim! Well no it's actually a quiz game. Gain yardage by answering questions correctly and moving the ball down field. The action is illustrated by real NFL film clips and commentary from USA football commentators.

SHARK ALERT

Watch the massive carnivores cruise the seas and learn fascinating facts about the predators in their natural habitat and then face a trivia quiz about the ocean going monsters.

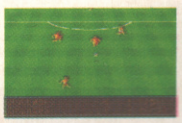
REBEL ASSAULT

Yes, the incredible LucasArts Star Wars flight sim comes to the CD-i and with the machine's tech spec this could be the most impressive version of the lot! Featuring fantastic 3D graphics, you must climb into the hot seat of an X-Wing fighter and take on the Imperial forces of darkness. Loads of digitised film footage from the movies and really amazing cinematic space sequences.

MAD DOG MCREE

The American Laser Games' top arcade shooter comes to the CD-i. Philips has already got a light gun in production and unlike other versions of Mad Dog the delay between you pulling off a shot and the screen updating is minimal. As we said, the best. (Turn to page 105 to read the CVG preview.)

STRIKER



Another famous footie name manages to chalk up an appearance on CD-i. Striker features a three dimensional perspective for play and a massive range of coaching challenges.

ZELDA: THE WAND OF GAMELON

No, a Nintendo game hasn't slipped on to the Philips page by mistake, but The Big Nin' doesn't seem to mind letting the popular Zelda series go to CD-i, so we doubt if Philips minds putting it out! Zelda must free King Harkinian and Link through forests, swamps and the spiritual fairy pool, fending off the awesome array of animated beasties along the way!

"SWEET OR SALTED POPCORN SIR?"

Some of the Digital, full motion video, Cartridge titles you can see now on CD-i...

FATAL ATTRACTION

Michael Douglas and rabbit loving Glenn Close star in this chilling thriller, though surely the majority of the populace must have seen this by now.

THE HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER

Sean Connery as the Russian (with a decidedly Scottish accent) submarine captain defecting to the West, or is he trying to destroy it?

PATRIOT GAMES

Harrison Ford as the former CIA agent Jack Ryan who manages to foil an IRA terrorist attack in London and is pursued by the murdering survivor.

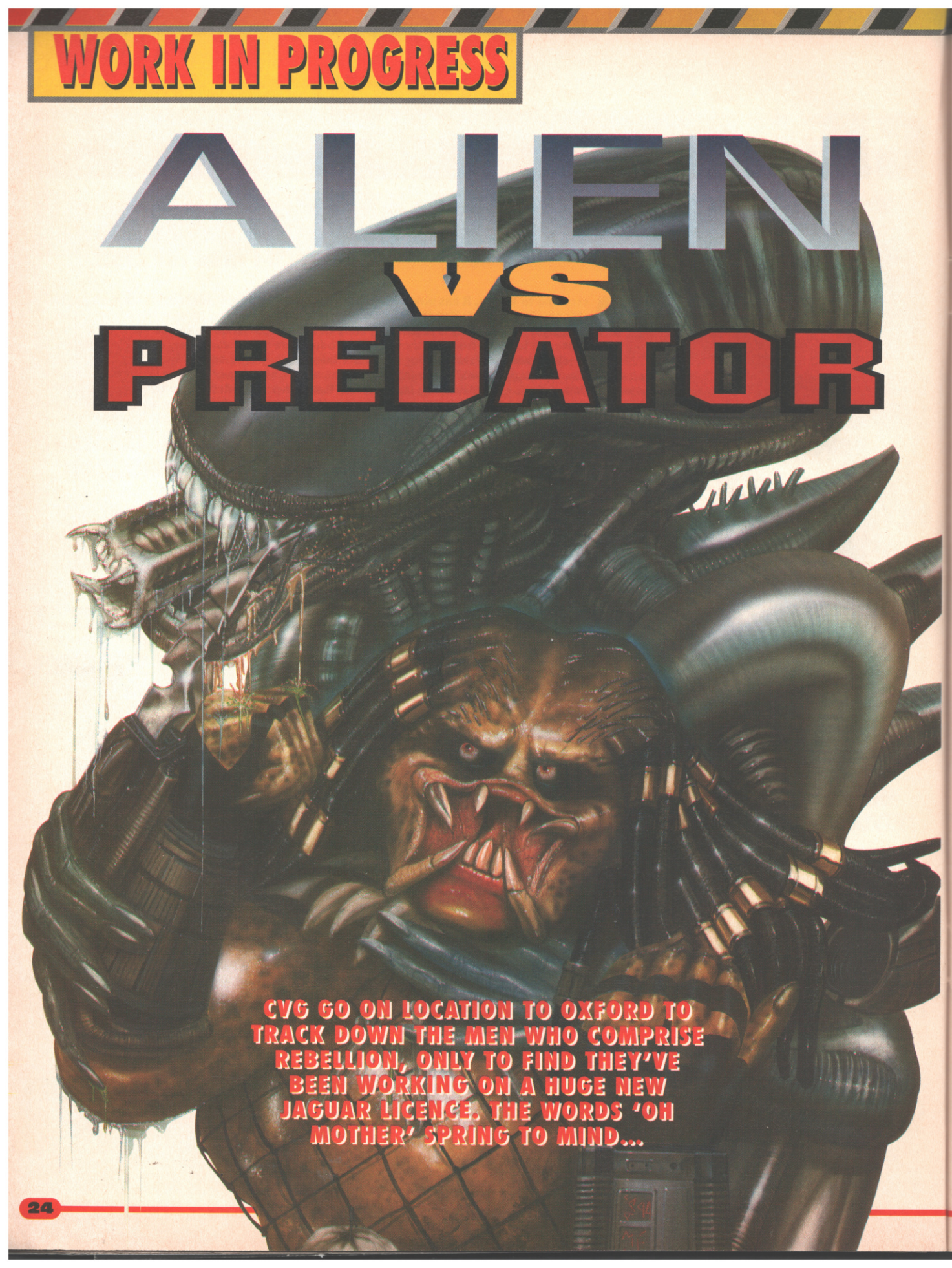
NAKED GUN 2½

Leslie Nielsen as the bungling police inspector from the Police Squad series who comes out with all the lines you least expect and wish you could remember.

BLACK RAIN

Douglas, again, as an American cop caught up in a Japanese mafia drug plot in downtown Tokyo.

ALIEN VS PREDATOR



CVG GO ON LOCATION TO OXFORD TO TRACK DOWN THE MEN WHO COMPRISE REBELLION, ONLY TO FIND THEY'VE BEEN WORKING ON A HUGE NEW JAGUAR LICENCE. THE WORDS 'OH MOTHER' SPRING TO MIND...

AvP FACTS

Machine: Jaguar
Out: March (provisional)
Producers: Rebellion
Team: Jason Kingsley (Producer), Andrew Whittaker (Alien Intelligence), Toby Banfield (Graphics), Stuart Wilson (Graphics) Justin Rae, Rob Dibley and Mike Beaton (Coding).

Yes the bitch is back, and facing an opponent almost as formidable as Sigourney Weaver.

In the outskirts of Oxford something big is happening. Two of the most ferocious aliens ever to hit the big screen are about to take on the human race in an entirely new breed of game.

Development house, Rebellion, is working on what is undoubtedly one of the biggest licences ever to hit a home computer, Alien vs Predator. This impressive licence is for an equally impressive system, the Jaguar, a machine Rebellion head-honcho Jason Kingsley can't enthuse enough about. "With Alien vs Predator we've got a game which has the Jaguar easily matching the performance of a '486 DX2 66Mhz PC." More impressive is that the Jag costs a fifth of the price of a decent PC.

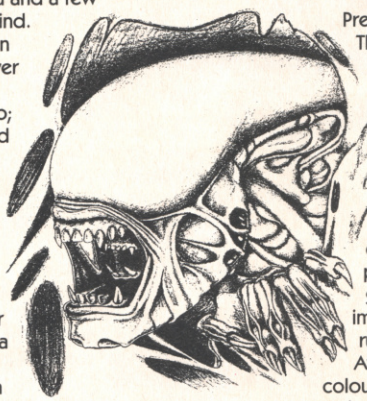
21st Century game

Even before the character intelligence routines had been included, the game was attracting plenty of interest. At the CES it pulled crowds to the Jaguar stand where Kinsgley and Co had to fend off questions such as "So it's running on video, is it?" The fact was what they were seeing was the real Mcoy. "We're very pleased with AvP so far," says Kingsley, "especially because we've achieved so much in only nine months. When we showed the game to 20th Century Fox at the CES they were really impressed. I think that up until now no-one has really done justice to its licences."

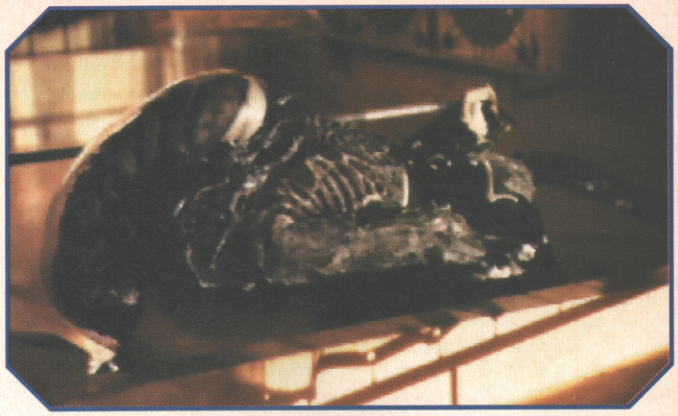
The plot is simple, and you can't help but get the feeling that if 20th Century Fox decide to unite Aliens with Predator on the big screen, this would be the best way to do it.

How many colours?

The game is set predominately inside a marine base, where most of the troops have gone off on exercise, leaving you and a few mates behind. That's when you discover an abandoned ship; abandoned that is except for the aliens, who are released into the base. After getting to a safe area you send a distress signal. Fortunately your marine buddies pick it up, but so does a passing Predator ship...



This translates into a first-person perspective shoot-'em-up, along the lines of games such as Terminator Rampage and Doom, although as Jason Kingsley points out this isn't a case of producing a similar game. "Doom is certainly impressive, but that only runs in 8-bit colour mode, AvP runs in 16-bit (65,000 colours). You also have the opportunity of playing the three main characters which gives the game even more lasting appeal."



Rebellion's Alien Vs Predator on the Jaguar will look as good as anything on a 486 DX2 66MHz PC.

There's certainly plenty of storage room to play with. Although Jag cartridges have a similar storage capacity to normal SNES and Mega Drive carts, special compression routines allow more to be crammed on. In the case of AvP it's a 2Mb (16M-bit) cart with around 40Mb (112M-bits) squeezed on.

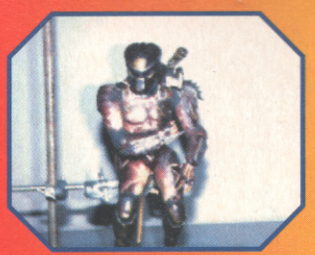
Let's go ape

All this room has been put to good use. The game is set over seven levels of Marine base, two on the Predator ship and one in the Alien craft. Elements have been borrowed from the movies for the various scenes, such as the Med-lab in the base and the egg room, ☛

MODEL GRAPHICS

With the characters all being drawn in 3D, the graphics team needed to come up with a way of making them look convincing from all angles. In the end they opted to use models, which are photographed, scanned in and then retouched before being dropped into the game. The models are a mixture of off-the shelf kits and custom-made figures.

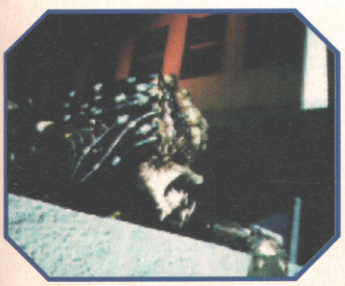
A similar system has been used for the backdrops. The walls, ceilings and floors are made up from tiles which were first made out of wax and resin and then digitised and overlaid on the backgrounds. The technique used to map the graphics on to the background is similar to texture mapping on the PC, which has become common place in the last 12 months. Rebellion calls its version Advance Texture Manipulation, which allows fast graphics movement in high resolution mode. In this case that means 64,000 colours on screen at once. The resulting 3D effect is astounding, especially when your character moves sideways.



First a resin and femo model of Predator is built, photographed against a plain background and then picture scanned into a PC. Then it's a case of cutting out the image and calculating various facets such as light sources.

The next part of translating the Predator from film to computer is the backdrop. Nearly all of them start off life like this. The yellow panel is actually made out of wax to give it a translucent look, which will form the walls of the Predator ship.

This is a model which will feature in Rebellion's Dungeon, a Jaguar game due for release later this year. It's a Dungeons & Dragons adventure featuring all manner of ghoulish critters that are after your flesh.



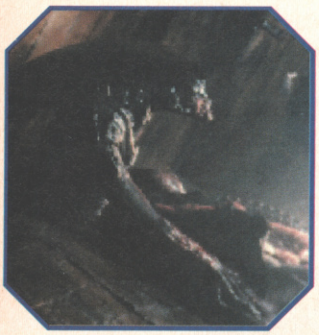
Rebellion believes in the 'method' way of programming. This is one of the team getting into a role.

WORK IN PROGRESS

where you can go crazy-ape with your flame thrower – just like Ripley did in Aliens.

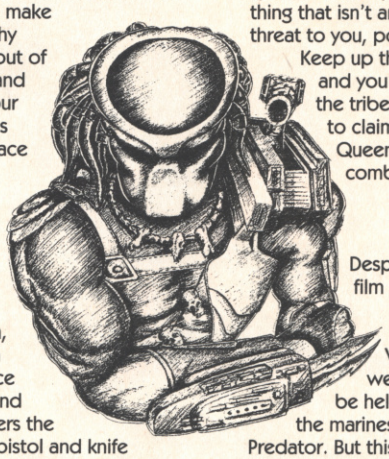
From what we've seen, Alien vs Predator could do for the Jaguar what Sonic did for the Mega Drive. Even though the version we saw was at least a month from completion it's clear to see that this game is going to be something special.

The game's characters all have different tasks and different weapons at their disposal.



65,000 colours and 40Mb of game – could AvP set the standard for the Jaguar?

Your mission, as a top marine, is to take care of the Predator, kill the queen alien, make acidic crunchy mincemeat out of her drones and rescue all your marine mates before the face huggers get them. For this you have access to all the neat weapons from the film, ranging from the totally ace pulse rifles and flame throwers the rather puny pistol and knife



Predator

The biggest problem Rebellion had with including the Predator is that, basically, he's death on legs. Having loads of high-tech weapons plus and invisibility gadget means he'd make short work out of the marines and the aliens. To get around this they've included an 'honour' points system. Basically if you attack something that isn't armed or isn't a direct threat to you, points are deducted.

Keep up that sort of behaviour and you'll be kicked out of the tribe. You ultimate aim is to claim the head of the Queen Alien in one-on-one combat.

Alien

Despite their fearsome film presence, the Aliens in the game start out disadvantaged. Without ranged weapons they might be helpless compared to the marines and the lethal Predator. But this has been remedied, with the Aliens being able to run twice as fast as any of the other characters and use air ducts. So basically they can find out where a character is heading and get there before and lie in wait. Their mode of attack is short and violent; like in the acid-spewing Aliens use jaws, hands, tails, or a lethal combination of all the above.

All the ingredients you need to create your very own version Alien vs Predator. Wax, a gas burner, several bits of multi-coloured Lego, a few books and some models. Oh, and of course, programmers, artists and several thousand pounds worth of development machine.

A Predator's-eye view. As in the movies, he has several different displays which come in handy for particular situations. He's also kitted out with all the necessary tools of the trade, including a cannon, net gun and the rather deadly boomerang which sliced Gary Busey in half in Predator 2, film fans.

COMIC CAPERS

Alien vs Predator the game isn't the first time these two have gone head-to-head, 1992 saw them thrashing the hell out of each other courtesy of Dark Horse Comics. The storyline was basically an excuse for an ultra-action slug-fest, with the Predator landing on an alien-infested planet where a small band of humans are struggling for survival. What it boils down to is the Predator is after the aliens, the aliens after the humans and the humans after everyone. Keep an eye out for the Predator's latest Dark Horse comic outing where he squares off against Robocop.

Med-lab is a dangerous place to hang around. Fortunately there's usually several inches of glass between you and the aliens. The face huggers behave just as they did in the movies, scuttling across the floor then leaping. You have to move fast to shoot them.

As a marine one of your only advantages is access to the armouries. The Aliens aren't bright enough to use weapons and the Predator is hard enough already. If you don't keep a note of their location you're liable to run out of ammunition leaving you wielding just a knife, which isn't the best weapon to attack an alien with.

Doors don't open automatically, which can really slow you down if you're running from an alien, and not all doors have convenient glass windows. Often there's no way to tell what's on the other side other than to open them.

This is has to be one of the highlights of the game – the alien egg room. Get too close to an egg and it slowly opens, at which point you'd better start shooting – or you'll find yourself wearing a face mask which isn't very easy to get rid of.

Sound effects for doors, guns, the aliens, the Predator and many other features are being sampled straight from the appropriate films. Rather than opt for background music, Rebellion has decided to put the Jaguar's sound processor to use, churning out atmospheric background effects.

If you're a marine, the Predator is your greatest worry. If you're unarmed and run away without bothering him you should be OK; but if you decide to attack you could end up as the latest addition to his trophy cabinet.

THE LEGEND OF THE MYSTICAL NINJA™

I URGE YOU ALL TO MAKE YOUR WAY DOWN TO THE SHOPS & BUY THIS IMMEDIATELY IT'S FAB!! TOTAL 90% JAN '94

THE GRAPHICS AND SOUND ARE FAULTLESS... YOU COULDN'T POSSIBLY GO WRONG WITH A COPY OF MYSTICAL NINJA. I SMILED ALL THE WAY THROUGH IT. SUPER PLAY 90% JAN '94

KONAMI

Konami (UK) Limited Konami House 54a Cowley Mill Road Uxbridge Middlesex UB8 2QE

WORD UP WITH PAUL

If you've been watching TV, reading the newspaper or listening to the radio lately you'll no doubt be aware that the Monopolies And Mergers Commission is currently investigating the videogames industry following a number of complaints from various parties concerning, among other issues, the huge market share enjoyed by Sega and Nintendo and the high price of software. Good thing or bad thing?

To be honest, it'll probably end up a waste-of-time thing. Despite the claims of high production costs, cartridge prices are excessive – and if you don't think so at the moment, wait until you have to fork out £100 for a copy of Virtua Racing. Also, compare UK prices with their US equivalents – £40-£50 over here, as opposed to $40-$50 over there, which works out at around £28-£35. A hefty increase, in anybody's book.

What makes the MMC investigation a little pointless, though, is that the punter – you – is voting against these high prices by hitting where it hurts – the industry purse. It's not really the fault of the games companies that they charge through-the-roof prices for their titles – after the distributor, retailer, licensor (if it's a movie or coin-op based title) have taken their cut – not forgetting the substantial amount which has to be paid to Sega or Nintendo for the privilege of creating games that run on their systems – there's not a lot left for profit.

Cartridge sales are down dramatically, according to various industry bigwigs, and increasingly more people are looking towards new technology such as Jaguar, CD32 and high-end PCs, with better graphics, faster processors and bigger games than the current crop of consoles. So by the time the MMC's report is given to the government at the end of the year, it could be possible that The Big Two's market share is a far cry from the 90% currently held. And what can the MMC do anyway? In America, where similar action was taken, the result was a ticking off and a slightly less rigid licensing system. So, worthwhile attempt to loosen the grip of the big boys, or too little too late? We shall see. In the meantime, make sure you only buy the best by reading CVG every month, and happy gaming!

RAND

COMP WINNERS CORNER

We like competitions at CVG. It's our chance to put something back, is the way we see it when we're in our self-righteous mood. And the best part of it though, is that we don't even have to pay for the prizes! We've liberated an absolute horde of goodies from various software companies over the last few issues, and received a veritable stack of entries from readers wishing to win said goodies. Not everybody can pick up a prize, but here's a list of people who've been lucky lately. And remember – everyone's a winner when they buy CVG! (Stop it, you sad man Ed)

XMAS SPOT THE SHOT

Robert Cook
Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex

IF I DON'T WIN I'LL BE BACK COMP

Peter Oyediran
London SW11

Runners up:

Chris Cartwright
Ashtead, Surrey

Sarah Wilson
Westerham, Kent

Sarah Winner
Nottingham

Jim Spooner
Dorking, Surrey

Martin Reynolds
Leatherhead

VIRGIN GAMES COMP (DEC 93)

Daniel Boutros
London NW3

LAMBORGHINI COMP

Martin Piddock
Folkestone, Kent

Billy Fung
Middlesex

Julian Dunn
Llanelli, Dyfed

A Stewart
Andover, Hants

L Mihic
London W13

H Blackwell
Angmering Village, W Sussex

Lee Reynolds
Bedfont, Middlesex

C Hurst
Cheadle, Cheshire

Elliot Vernon
Brannstone, Leicester

Mr Staff
Grantham, Lincs

3DO COMP

Peter Wright
York, N Yorkshire

ZOOL COMP

Ross Johnson
Loughborough, Leics

Runners up:
Richard Walters
Kington, Herefordshire

Peter Orford
Bromsgrove, Worcs
B60 2HE

Mark Flanagan
Westbury, Wilts

Samantha Taylor
Waltham Abbey, Essex

Gary Chaplin
Bridlington, East Yorkshire

JOLLY BOYS IN RAND TAP SHOCK!

Jolly Boys (left to right) Tony Gray, Nigel Taylor, David Upchurch ('s arm) and Simon Byron can't believe what they're seeing – Rand on the pull!

What's going on here, then? Could it be CVG Editor Paul Rand chatting to a young lady in a crowded nightclub? Indeed it is – and The Jolly Boys are surprised, to say the least! The Jolly Boys – made up of members of CVG, PC Review and The One scuttled off to Bath for a weekend of fun and frolics – and by the look of things, Rand got a bit carried away. Especially when he got all smug and asked the rest of the group "What's it like, dancing with men?"

SPOT THE SHOT!

Welcome, readers, to another opportunity to win a software prize of our choice in this easy-to-create, difficult-to-enter competition! As you're no doubt already aware, each month we take a screenshot of one of the games featured in this issue, run it through our so-powerful-they-could-be-used-to-blow-up-the-world Apple Macintosh computers, mess about with the picture a bit and then print it right here and expect you to guess which game that it's taken from.

Remember, it's not necessarily a reviewed game that's featured – it could be from Previews or even the News section. Once you think you've guessed what this issue's teaser is, then jot down your answer on a postcard or the back of a sealed-down envelope, add your name, address and the machine you own and post it to: SPOT THE SHOT ISSUE 148, CVG, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU, ensuring your entry reaches us by 14 March 1994.

MEET THE CVG CREW:

PAUL – Recently, the Ed went back to the land of his birth – Oop North – for a well-earned (Are you sure? – Rest of team) break. Now, we all know about Rand's insistance that he has 'Strawberry Blond' hair. Well now he has – sort of; the vain sod went and got his locks highlighted! What we want to know though, is how come his eyebrows are the same colour as his newly-blond barnet? (I didn't bloody bleach them – Rand)

GARY – After finally getting round to buying the office a new Game Boy, Our Gaz was utilising its portability on the way to work the other morning. When he got off the bus though, he was so enthralled in his game he didn't notice that the Italian Church by the bus stop was in the middle of a funeral procession: "I don't think they appreciated my interruption or that I was playing Mortal Kombat either. I didn't know whether to do a special move or to pay my last respects."

RIK – It's been a kicking kind of month for politically incorrect staffwriter Rik. Not content with being booted out of house and home by his grandma (apparently she's just plain fed up of him), he's also booted a large hole in the gents toilet door at CVG Towers! "What happened,", chinny reck-ONs Mr Skews, "is that the door jammed, so I put my foot on it and pulled. A bit too hard." Granny Skews, we know where you're coming from.

DENIZ – Not being a fan of buying things, Deniz has been on the phone this month looking for his usual quota of free goodies. Top of his list of blagged items has to be the Cu-Base MIDI sequencing package, valued at a not-inconsiderable £800 or so. As he's a bit of a keyboard wiz, Den will doubtlessly have loads of fun with that one. Until the producers phone up and demand it back after reading this, once we've sent them a complimentary copy of CVG.

JULIE – So much for Julie's New Year's resolution (see last issue). She's belching as good as ever – in fact, we're wondering whether she's visited Los Angeles lately. Non-obvious earthquake gags aside though, it's been a bit quiet on the Heap front this month, as she's been splitting her time between CVG and a secret thing which we can't tell you about yet. But rest assured, you'll know soon enough. Or so the Publisher keeps saying.

PETREA – Art bod Petrea enjoys her nights out – apart from one in particular. After asome grown-ups' pop down the local hostelry, Petrea decided to saunter home, only to find that, once she got there, she'd lost her keys and couldn't get in! A quick phonecall and one expensive locksmith later and the door was opened. We have to say, why spend all that money when you could get Rik to 'put his foot on it and pull'.

STEVE – Crumbly Managing Editor Steve has been burbling on about the good old days when journalists used typewriters (Old fashioned writing device used before computers – Ed) and didn't write editorial columns about cross-country drinking, phantom dates or smashing up the toilet. "Why can't we have some proper copy about Space Hoppers (You don't want to know – Ed), how we wore shoes with compasses hidden in the heels, or even the games we played in our childhoods?" moans Steve aged 50.

REVIEW

SNES | by KONAMI | £74.99

Out March. Contact Konami (0895 853000) for information.

Be sure to sort out the cops from the robbers because Konami's converted that infamous coin-op on to the SNES

LETHAL ENFORCERS

It's amazing what a difference the use of a light gun can make to a game, because after all what is Lethal Enforcers other than one more Operation Wolf clone. It beats using a joypad you see, it's far more authentic to shoot at the screen with a lifelike replica of a Dirty Harry-style shooter – lifelike that is apart from the fact that it's bright, neon blue and made of plastic.

The object of the game is to trash a succession of terrorists, drug dealers and other undesireables and promote yourself up the ranks to commander. At the end of each mission (of which there are five) your performance is evaluated and if your shooting accuracy is up to the required standard then you'll go up a rank. Similarly, inaccuracy will mean you will drop a rank, which can get frustrating, believe me.

Deciphering who are the goodies and baddies can prove tricky; ie is the guy above just an over zealous air steward or someone about to blow your brains out?

"It's not all work, work, work, in this bank you know." Unfortunately, for the bank clerk, you haven't been honing your shooting skills.

Mission possible

Before entering the main missions your best bet is to play through the shooting range where it's easier to promote your status, giving you a head start in the missions.

Each mission gives you a series of scenes to battle through, with panning views and an end-of-mission boss. As you

In Enforcers you get a measly six shooter to begin with, but reloading is simple enough, you just point off screen and fire.

VERDICT

Better than the Mega Drive version? Well, there's better definition in the graphics and the sounds are sharper, but that's it. There seems to be the same inherent problem with this style of game: inaccurate shooting with the gun. Unfortunately, the hostages in the SNES version don't die or bleed like they do on the Mega Drive, plus with two players the screen keeps flashing, so you can't tell who's getting hit. Even with all these complaints Lethal Enforcers is a highly enjoyable action game, but possibly not worth the high asking price.

DENIZ AHMET

progress, the assassins resort to more lethal tactics, like popping out of unsuspecting car boots and crates. They also start throwing grenades and knifes at you which you can shoot down. These are tricky enough, but hostages and police men also appear unsuspectingly and blasting them brings you one step closer to losing a life.

It takes two to tango

The two-player game is by far the best way to approach things

It's so much easier disposing of an opponent when you don't have to look them in the eye you know.

because the onslaught doesn't get more difficult to compensate. To help you further there are better weapons available which float on screen, waiting to be shot and hence collected.

As usual you run out of ammunition very quickly. Your basic revolver has only six shots, so you must develop a tactic of well timed reloads so as you're not left without ammunition at a tense moment. To reload you simply point away from the screen and shoot.

While Lethal Enforcers is little more than mindless blasting, it's the best mindless fun you're going to have for some time to come.

TRIGGER-HAPPY

You need to have lethal weapons to be lethal. Here's the selection you're likely to encounter at some stage in every game. You will however, lose your weapon if you get shot too much.

SHOTGUN This is a nice hefty weapon but aim carefully.

RIFLE This is excellent for bosses since it blasts three shots simultaneously.

MAGNUM The world's most powerful handgun is nice and fast here.

Sometimes you get more than one pop at a guy...

...but if your name's Deniz you still manage to miss him.

The idea of the game is to do it to them before they do it to you.

A quick practice in the shooting range is always a good idea, but then it's on to the real thing (well the pretend real thing).

VERDICT

Despite being lumbered with the pink gun I enjoyed playing this conversion, though not for long. Yes the graphics are as accurate as they could be on the SNES, bar the blood removal. Sound's atmospheric too. However, the screen flashes when the gun is fired, making it extremely difficult to see where your bullets are landing. My main gripe though, is value. There's not much depth or variety to the game. And I don't care if it comes with guns, no cart is worth £75. Why not go halves with a mate?

RIK SKEWS

SNES

PROS: The shootin' is great rootin' tootin' fun. Good coin-op conversion.

CONS: Too expensive and the gameplay can be limiting.

GRAPHICS Faithful to the coin-op, sharper than the Mega Drive, but still grainy. **80%**

SOUND Typical 'American' cop music, with muffled speech samples. **77%**

GAMEPLAY There's no variety, so it's repetitive, yet very enjoyable. **80%**

VALUE It's costly, even with a gun and it's not a big game. **71%**

MISS OK HIT!

81

FIVE MEGADRIVE GAMES FOR UNDER £50!

ALL PROCEEDS GO TO CHARITY

HELP! is a strictly limited edition compilation and is available exclusively from Dixons, but only while stocks last!
All the games in this compilation have been donated by the publishers absolutely free of charge. Dixons are donating all profits from the sale of **HELP!** which will go to Childline, The Prince's Trust and other charities to be announced.

Dixons

where else can you get HELP!?

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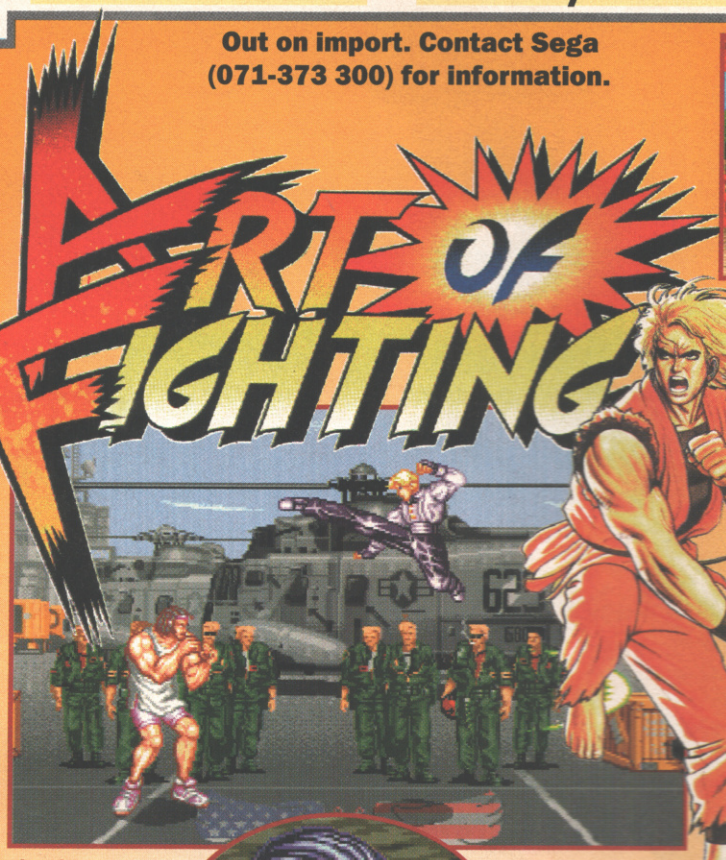
REVIEW

MEGA DRIVE ▸ by SEGA ▸ £TBA

Out on import. Contact Sega (071-373 300) for information.

Art of Fighting's saving grace are the graphics. The backgrounds in particular are very well drawn.



Tap the C button to provoke the enemy and reduce their green energy bar. An excellent and highly amusing feature.

Bandwagon. Definition? See Sega's release of SF II clone Art of Fighting et al...

Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, so they say, and if that's true then the original Streetfighter machine that appeared way back in 1986 is probably feeling as flat as a pancake by now. Apart from spawning the greatest beat-'em-up ever, Streetfighter II, it's inspired no end of run-of-the-mill fighting games.

To access the special attacks the green energy bar is used up. To replenish it hold the C button and the character meditates.

The character profiles include what the blood type of each character is. Why?

All the standard Streetfighter attacks are here, such as this fireball attack.

Moan, moan, moan

Only Bally Midway's excellent Mortal Kombat series has offered anything like competition to Capcom's wonder though. The reason? Well, apart from the infamous death moves it also has a range of regular fighting combinations which are as easy and nearly as much fun to pull off as Streetfighter II's.

The other pale imitations rely on either ripping off Streetfighter moves or require gameplay-destroying complex combos.

Rant, Rave

Predictably Art of Fighting goes down both of these roads, and the result? One is in dire need of an AA man, while the other has a head-on collision, but we'll leave the final judgement for the verdict.

As for the story, well what do you expect. Exactly. There's no surprises here either. It's the usual cliche-ridden rubbish about some pretty looking girl being abducted and requiring the assistance of a group of braindead musclemen. This, of course, boils down to the standard beat-'em-up affair with lots of combat-able dudes thumping the stuffing out of each other over different backdrops and differing time lengths and hey, you can even play the bosses or both have the same characters. Big Deal. ●

Art of Fighting is mediocre and dreadfully uninspired. Stick with Streetfighter II SCE.

VERDICT

Beat-'em-ups have to be pretty special nowadays to compete with the likes of Streetfighter II and sadly Art of Fighting isn't. Like Turtles Tournament the basic SF moves have been ripped off, but unlike the Konami game the new moves are bland and require difficult combinations to pull them off. Add this to slow and unresponsive controls, irritating Neo-Geo-style music and muffled FX and you've got a beat-'em-up that should be kicked into submission. Stick with Streetfighter II or Sega's own excellent Eternal Champions.

RIK SKEWS

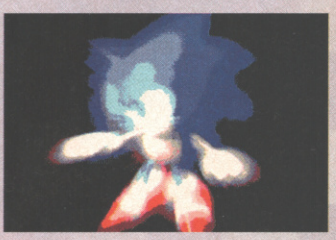
Out now. Contact Sega (071-373 3000) for information.

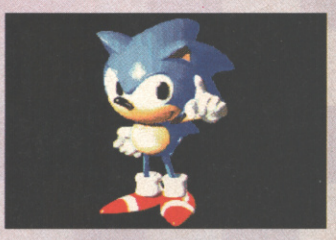
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 3

Sonic's back! In a third incarnation that's noisier, faster, bigger, better and packed with some altogether spikier gameplay than ever before...

INTRODUCING...

First impressions are what count right? And if that's true then you can certainly count on the intro on Sonic 3, it'll blow you away. It may be short but it's incredibly sweet. The graphics really are eyepopping here.



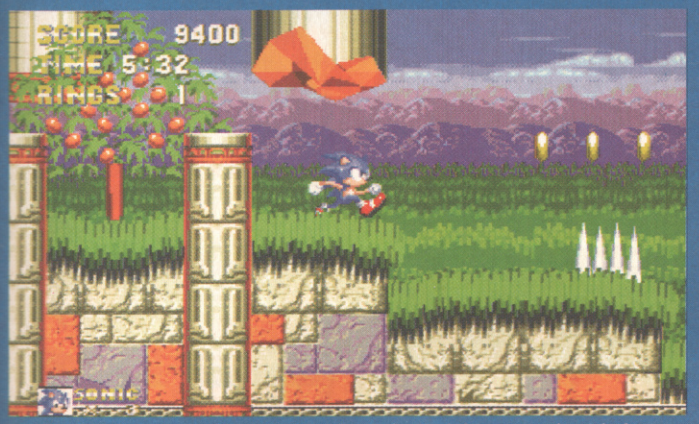


LEVEL HEADED

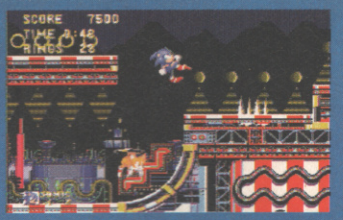
Six new levels await you in Sonic 3, but although that doesn't sound a great deal, wait until you start exploring...

Angel Island Zone – Level 1: Easy stuff this one. It's got a tropical backdrop which gets nice and volcanic later on.

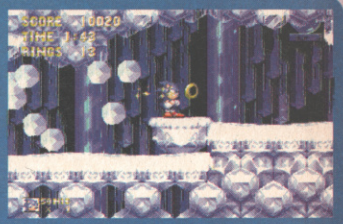
Hydrocity Zone – Level 2: Once again Sonic dons his swimming togs. The music gets very dramatic when Sonic needs air.



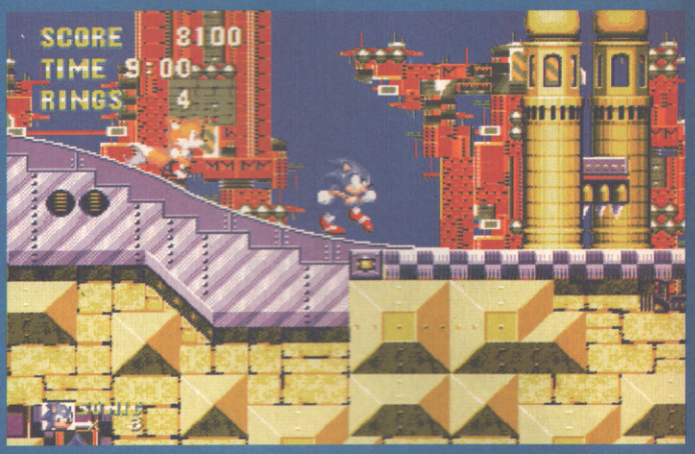
Marble Garden Zone – Level 3: Use the Spin Dash here to spin switches, which raise the landscape to let you progress.



Carnival Night Zone – Level 4. Arguably the hardest zone; plays like a level from Sonic Spinball.



Icecap zone – Level 5: You've never seen anything like the speed on this level. Simply breathtaking.



Launch Base Zone – Level 6: The final level. Will you reach it?

VERDICT

Sonic 3 has everything: the graphics are stunning, attention to detail is breathtaking; appropriate tunes complement the action perfectly and the sound FX are equally brilliant. But this is nothing compared to the gameplay! You can play it fast for a buzz or you can take it slow and look in every nook and cranny for bonuses. Either way you'll have the time of your life. Bigger, better, faster, more; Sonic 3 packs every gameplaying treat you could possibly ever want.

RIK SKEWS

Sonic and Tails know not to trust Robotnik right? After all, they've had two games with which to get used to his evil manner. Knuckles is more naive however. He's guardian of the Chaos Emeralds and like a Good Samaritan is willing to believe the best in everyone.

Sonic the Hedgehog

Robotnik's taken advantage of Knuckles' friendliness and has made up all manner of despicable stories about how Sonic is the Emerald stealing evil doer while he, Robotnik, is a gallant robot, dedicated to saving the world. So when Knuckles catches Sonic heading his way, fresh from grabbing the Emeralds from Robotnik's clutches, he sets an ambush to return them to Robotnik.

Sonic 2

Little does Knuckles know that Sonic was going to return the Emeralds to him. Now, with the power of the crystals in his hands, Robotnik can set about the task of recharging his war machine that was crippled at the end of Sonic 2. All these events have left Sonic a little ruffled as on the one hand he must yet again put an end to Robotnik's evil plan, while on the other he must get his pal Tails home.

Sonic Spinball

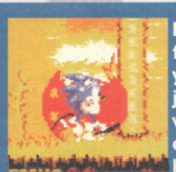
However, he and Tails are running late anyhow and Sonic quickly realises that the best course of action would be to plunge back, once again, into platform related action.

With this being a Sonic game the main idea, of course, is to collect rings. Apart from the standard extra life to be gained from collecting 100, if just 50 are gathered and a special stage marker passed by, Sonic will be transported to a special bonus level. Here he starts ☛

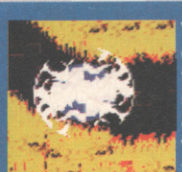
SUPER-SONIC

Sonic's not taking any nonsense from either the scenery or the baddies and to this effect he can collect three different and highly useful pick-ups.

Lets Sonic breathe underwater for a limited period. Be careful not to burst it though!



Protects Sonic from one hit. If you press the jump button while Sonic's encased in it he'll leap across the screen causing instant death to anything he touches.

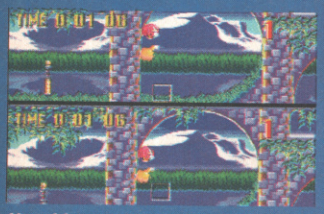


Well ace this one. An electromagnetic shield forms around Sonic, which means that any rings that are near him are drawn towards him. Stunning stuff.

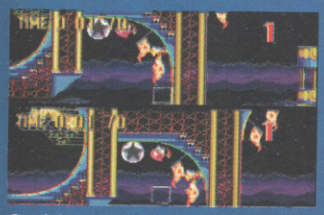
ON YOUR MARKS!

There's a great two-player split-screen mode in Sonic 3. What's even better is that the levels are completely different to those in the main game. Value for money huh?! Here's a gander at them:

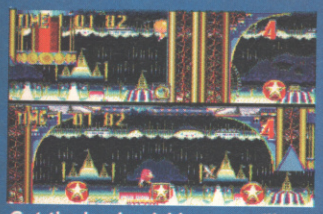
Loops a-plenty await you in the Azure Lake zone.



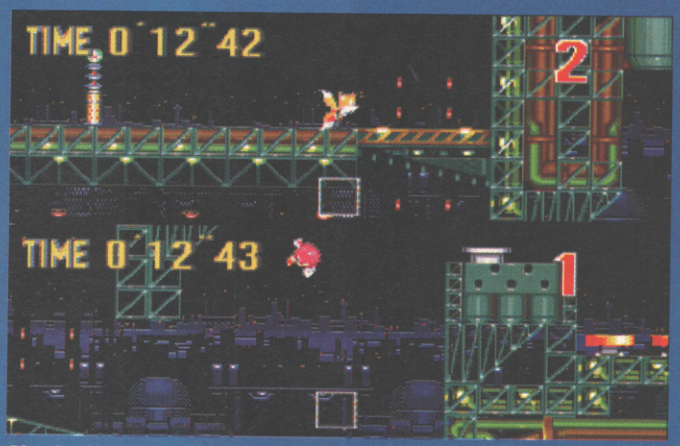
Knuckles and Tails succeed in defying gravity!



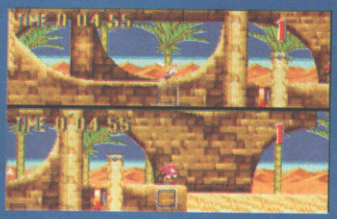
Sonic's your best bet thanks to his incredible speed.



Get the lead quickly, or you'll never catch up.

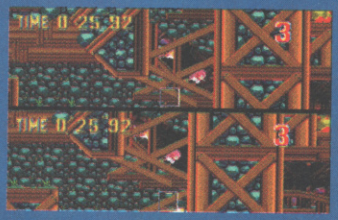


Play Sonic, Tails or Knuckles, it's completely up to you.



Avoid the quicksand in the Desert Palace...

... And watch out for the falling platforms too.



Use your spindash attack in the Endless Mine to destroy rocks.

leaping about on springs until bounced up to a giant bubblegum dispenser at the top.

Sonic Chaos

With luck Sonic should collide with the handle at the top of the dispenser. If this is done then a power-up laden gum ball drops out. Collect this and one of a number of bonuses (extra-life, shield etc) is your reward.

In previous games, heaps of rings had to be collected before Sonic got a sniff at the special stage. In Sonic 3 you need only collect one Mega Ring, but rest assured it's tucked away so finding it won't be easy. Once you do you'll be whisked away to an excellent 3D level. It's here where you have to pick up all the blue spheres, while avoiding the deadly red ones and bouncers which will spring you all over the place. Succeed and you'll be rewarded with one of the Chaos Emeralds. Fail and you'll die horribly. Just kidding you'll return to the main game.

Sonic 3

A nifty save game feature has also been included. This allows you to save up to six different games at whatever level you wish. However, it doesn't save which act you are in or the position that you've got to, simply the level. It does take account of how many continues and Chaos Emeralds you've saved though.

Anyway, by now you should have gathered that Sonic 3 is a truly excellent game, and if you haven't then listen up. 'Sonic 3 is brilliant'. Thank you!

VERDICT

I was all set to be highly critical of Sonic 3 after hearing that it was more of the same. Well, the same it is, but there are so many new and imaginative ideas that I have no complaints. The speed is brilliant, the graphics are far more detailed than the previous games, and being able to accelerate from a standstill is a superb addition. The levels are bigger, and in two-player mode it's really interactive with Tails being able to pick up Sonic and drop him elsewhere. This will keep you busy 'til Sonic 6 comes along.

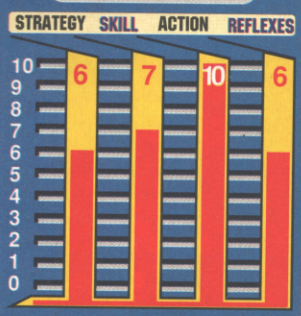
DENIZ AHMET

MEGA DRIVE

PROS: Bigger, better, brighter and more.

CONS: More of the same.

GRAPHICS	Some of the best we've seen on the machine for a platform game.	96%
SOUND	Great tunes, sound FX and of course that hypnotic ring sound.	90%
GAMEPLAY	Play it fast and finish it quick, or slow and search for hidden rooms.	92%
VALUE	It's likely to be expensive but you'll come back again and again.	90%



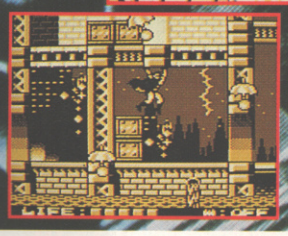
MISS OK HIT!

94

KONAMI

BATMAN
The Animated Series

THE JOKER, THE RIDDLER, THE PENGUIN, CATWOMAN, POISON IVY AND THE SCARECROW, BATMAN AND ROBIN HAVE THEIR WORK CUT OUT IF THEY'RE TO KEEP GOTHAM CITY FREE OF THESE MISERABLE MUTANTS AND THEIR DASTARDLY DEEDS.



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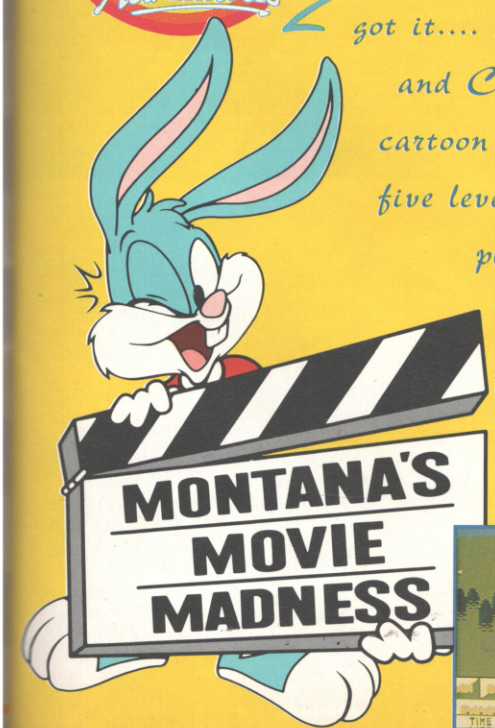
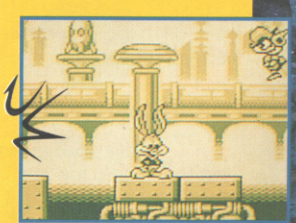
GAME BOY™

Nintendo®

TINY TOON Adventures 2

Montana Max is causing havoc in movie land and guess who has to sort him out? You got it.... Buster Bunny and Co. More crazy cartoon capers through five levels of hilarious platform action.





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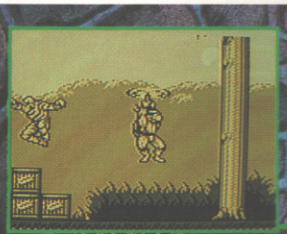

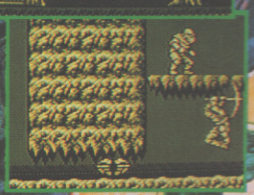

The fearless foursome are back once more, in their latest all action beat'em up adventure for GameBoy.

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Radical Rescue™

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REVIEW

MEGA-CD | by SONY | £44.99

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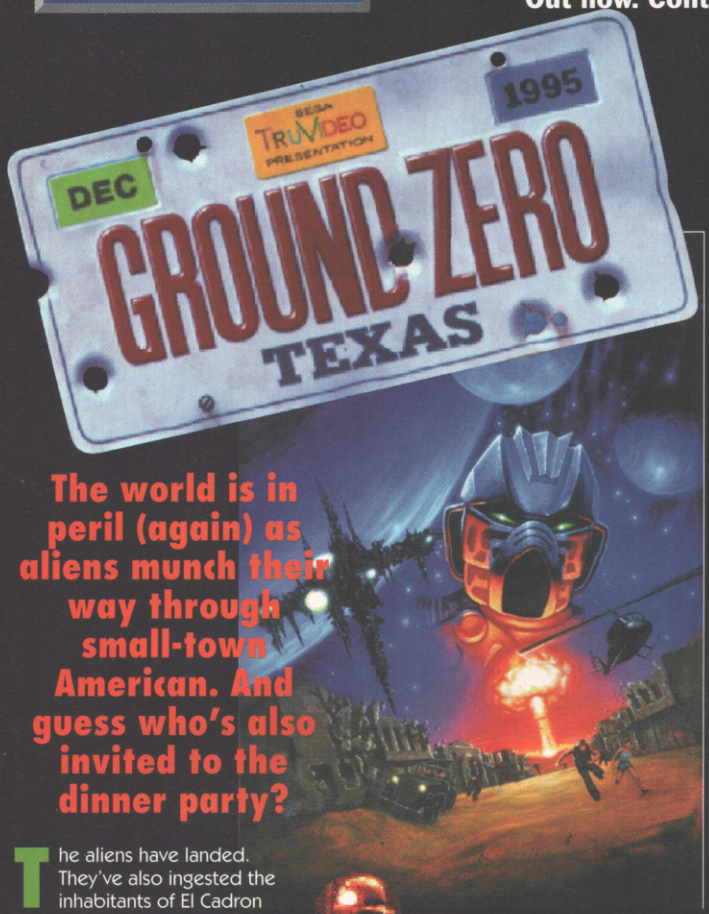


The world is in peril (again) as aliens munch their way through small-town American. And guess who's also invited to the dinner party?

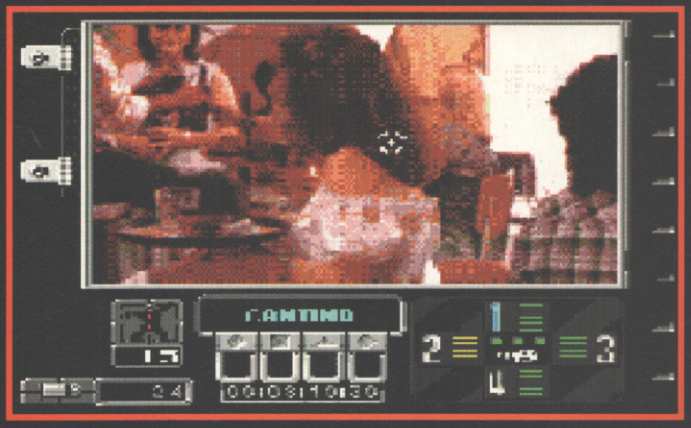
The aliens have landed. They've also ingested the inhabitants of El Cadron and taken on their identity, subsequently the government have sent in the marines to sort things out. Unfortunately the new extra-terrestrial inhabitants have wiped out every soldier in the area. As a last resort they've sent you in to clear up the alien menace.

Total war

Three words spring to mind – 'Dog,' 'Mad,' and 'McCree,' which Ground Zero, Texas is clearly derived from. In the action sequences you have to target the aliens with a crosshair and do it to them before they do it to you. To cover as much of the town as possible, there are four battle cameras, with these you can keep up with all the goings on, gain information from your field agents and blast the miscreants into atomic soup.

You never know when or where the aliens are though. The number of the appropriate battle-camera starts flashing when something occurs and you've got to select it as fast as possible, otherwise the aliens will start smashing

The aliens can appear at any time so you need to be quick on the draw. Just to keep things varied, different characters turn out to be aliens, so it's easy to get caught out and blast the wrong person.



The local greasy spoon cafe undergoes a bit of renovation when you and the aliens shoot it out. Sadly the hideous food survives, being so old it could practically withstand a nuclear explosion.

Federal agents lurk in the abandoned mines beneath El Cadron.

DIE ALIEN HELL BEASTS

A day in the life of the Marines' top alien eliminator isn't an easy one, but then again, when you're the only thing which stands between humanity and a large lunch where it's the main course you can't expect an easy ride. Here's how it goes...

6.45 am "Got a call from the president this morning. It seems that aliens have landed again and are eating people. Why can't they be nice for a change? Made my way to 'El Caldron' and was met by a nasty sergeant who shouts a lot. He told me that the aliens are kidnapping the locals and taking on their identities. Where have I heard that before?"

7.45 am "The weather here's nice, but the people are very cagey and spend most of their time punching each other and speaking in funny accents. Tried test-firing one of my battle-cams in the local restaurant, but an unfortunate ricochet killed the chef. The nasty sergeant told me not to do it again and punched me in the mouth. It really hurt too."

10.00 am "I got my first taste of action this morning. These two blokes robbed the bank then started fighting, then one of them turned out to be an alien. So I shot him. In the face. He won't be doing that again in a hurry! Within the first half hour I'd wasted 13 aliens, two civilians and a small yorkshire terrier. Whoever said work isn't fun?"

Built at the far-off Mechan-o works, the aliens' space craft is the Reliant Rialto of the space-ways. Capable of reaching warp five with a push start and rolling along at an economical three-parsecs to the gallon.

it up. As the cameras get damaged the picture breaks up, until it's finally put out of action.

Hard hat

By hanging out with the locals you gradually piece together what the aliens are after, plus discover the four digit access code which takes you to the next level and their hide-out. The game changes slightly on the later stages as you try to infiltrate the aliens base and 'encourage' them to abandon their plans for world domination. The format switches to a first-person perspective as you're now in control of a mobile camera strapped to a marine's helmet. Despite the evolving plot, it's still the same shoot-or-be shot gameplay, even when you get to see what the aliens look like when they shed their human shape.

Technically the game is impressive. When you shoot an alien the cut to it flying backwards is instantaneous. The footage is very grainy in places when compared to Sega's latest offering, Double Switch, but the action's usually so fast it doesn't make any difference.

This is one of your marine pals so don't shoot him.

VERDICT

The idea of spending millions on 'real' film footage has paid off in Ground Zero as the production is excellent, but the problem is that the plot is still something akin to a Fifties B-movie. Various scenarios have been filmed so you can't just learn a level as a different alien will try and kill you each time. Once you've got past the painful film intro though, there is decent game here, but at the end of the day (and indeed the end of the game) all you're doing is pointing and shooting.

GARY LORD

VERDICT

I'm in two minds over Ground Zero, Texas. The production is excellent: massive cast, excellent sets and totally over-the-top acting. On the other hand, the action is repetitive and the controls aren't very responsive. Together the plot-scenes almost balance the action, but what you're paying for is a game, not a movie, so in that respect it's a bit of a let down. However it comes on two CDs and there's enough action to make it reasonable value, if a bit tedious. One of the better interactive movie games around.

DENIZ AHMET

3.00 pm "I managed to finally find the entrance to aliens' base and guess what? Yeah, it was jam packed full of aliens, only they didn't look like friendly ole humans any more. Instead they look sort of people-shaped and rubbery with big buggy eyes. I decided to take the cautious approach and shoot everything that moved."

3.01pm "The cautious approach didn't work though. As I lie here with a sucking chest wound and wait for complete pulmonary failure, followed by respiratory collapse and the onset of brain death, I reflect on the monumental failure of the mission and hope that the sergeant doesn't notice I left a coffee cup ring on his desk."

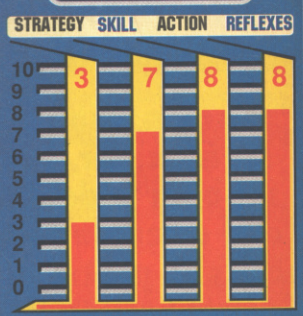
Die alien melonfarmer! In level two the aliens don't bother with disguises, preferring to look like something out of an early-Fifties B-movie.

This is one of your battle-cams. Inconspicuous, isn't it?

MEGA CD

PROS: Excellent film footage and some novel gameplay for this kind of game.
CONS: Can get a bit repetitive and the FMV is somewhat grainy.

GRAPHICS	Slightly grainy in places, but the screen area is nice and large.	90%
SOUND	Clear speech and plenty of whiz-bang effects.	89%
GAMEPLAY	Varies slightly later on, but is still very basic and repetitive.	70%
VALUE	For two discs and the amount of action they contain, it's a decent price.	80%



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REVIEW | CD-i | by PHILIPS | £39.99

CAESARS WORLD OF BOXING

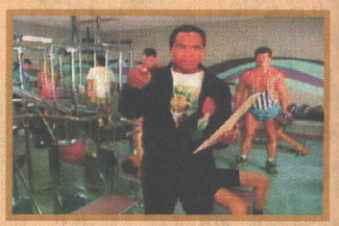
Championship Boxing comes to life with a little help from Digital Video!

When you choose to check up on Boxing World magazine, you'll be greeted by this guy.

Philips has created its own piece of pugilism for CD-i. This isn't your normal stand and fight affair though, there's much more to Caesars World Of Boxing (so called because it's based on the famous fighting venue, Caesars Palace in Las Vegas).

Float like a butterfly

The game's full to the brim with full-screen, full-motion video so you'll need the Digital Video cartridge to play Caesars. After creating your boxer, you enter into the world of amateur fighting. You've first got to hire a trainer from the on-screen selection; each has his or her own techniques, and all of them will demand a percentage of your purses once you turn pro. When that occurs, you then have to find a manager. Again, there's a selection to



One of the managers; a bit of a cocksure type, but he's cheap.

I AM THE GREATEST

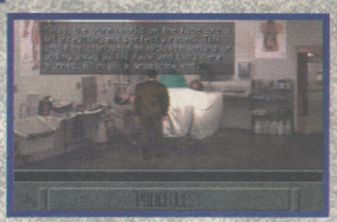
When it comes to the main part of the game – the actual boxing match – you can play in one of two ways. The Arcade option gives you control of the fighter, allowing you to move him left and right, punch, block shots and what have you. Select the Strategy mode, however, and you get a different type of game. You don't directly control your character, instead, you are presented with a number of slide bars which control aggression, what area of the opponent's body to concentrate on, which part of your body to defend most and which hand to lead with when throwing punches. Once you've set the bars, sit back and watch your chap go for it – and if it doesn't seem to be working, just alter the bars and hope for the best.

REVIEW | PC | by SIERRA | £44.99

POLICE QUEST IV

A rampaging serial killer, a sobbing widow and a couple of bowls of pretzels; welcome to another ordinary day on the force

Ever fancied being a cop in LA? How about fathoming a good old murder mystery? Well a murder mystery (or homicide mystery as Americans call it) is what you get with Police Quest IV, the latest graphic adventure from those talented people at Sierra.

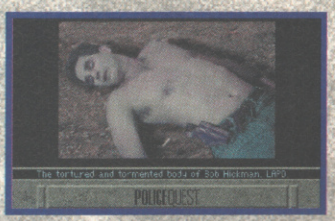


It's your pal who's lying dead in the morgue. Could it soon be you?

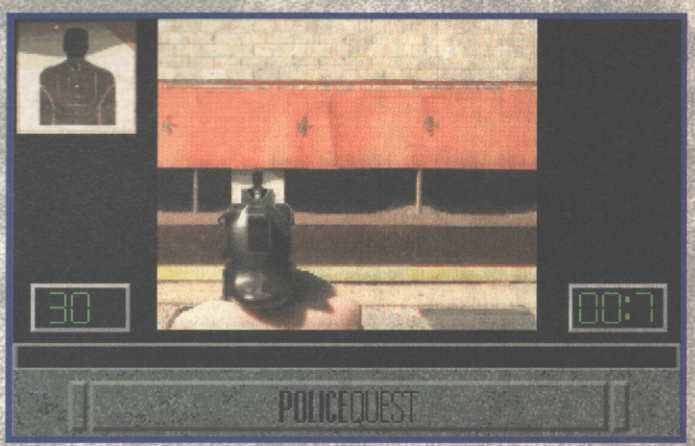
Mean and moody

It's 3am and a cop lies tortured, beaten and stabbed to death in a murky alleyway. Dumped half-naked behind a Mini Mart your only clue is a half-smoked cigarette and some gang graffiti. What makes it worse is that you also discover the body of a seven-year-old boy in a nearby dumpster. Someone's on a killing spree and you've got to find them. Cue dramatic music and wailing police sirens.

What sets Police Quest IV apart from other detective games is although the aim is to solve the murders, you've got to do it by the book. Don't expect any romance or heroics, think of yourself as a Dixon of Dock Green rather than Crocket or Tubbs of Miami Vice fame.



Poor old Bob Hickman. Stabbed, burnt, tied up and then left for dead. What a way to have to go.



Any good cop must practice his sharp shooting on the firing range.

Hurrah! Another win under your belt. Keep it up.

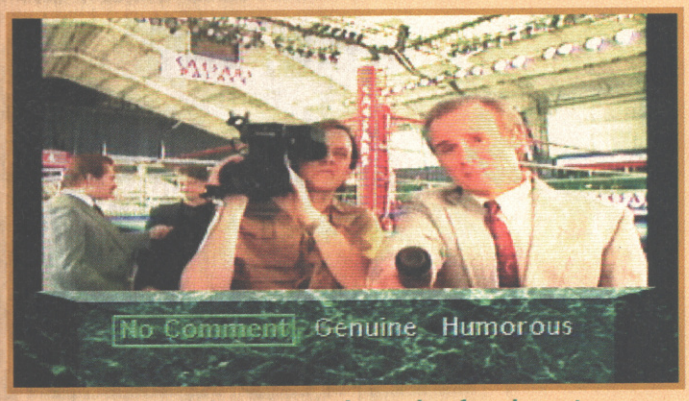
choose from, and they'll all want a slice of your takings when you start winning. Before each match, you can train in one of five different areas to build up a particular skill – you can either listen to the advice of your trainer or simply ignore entirely what he says and make up your own mind what you wish to train in.

VERDICT

The intro to Caesars is impressive, but then it should be since it's Digital Video. The game itself is something of a disappointment, though: the graphics in the boxing section are pretty poor; the 'management' sections are basic once you strip away the FMV, and the fighting is lifeless, with only a scant number of moves to perform. The only enjoyment you get out of the game is by rising up the ratings, but apart from that there's very little here unless you're a massive boxing fan.

PAUL RAND

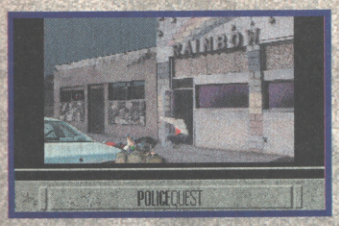
Out now. Contact Philips (071-222 0833) for information.



A little bit of TV publicity can work wonders for a boxer's career.

Sting like a bee

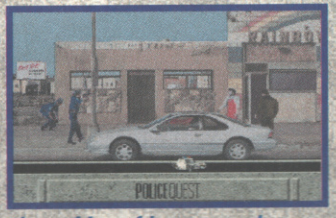
Once you become a professional, you can check on your progress by taking a look at the press. You can peruse either the daily newspaper, which only the best of the best are seen in; the TV listings magazine to find out whether your fight is to be shown on TV – a high accolade – or check out the latest issue of Boxing World, which gives details of world rankings, matches fought that month and current world records.



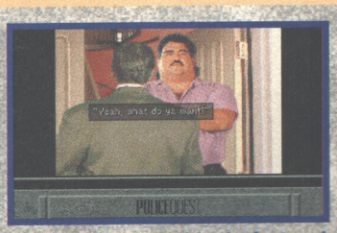
Gunfight at the Rainbow Diner. I've been ambushed!

It ain't glamourous work

Real life police procedures must be used, the evidence collated, autopsies ordered and paperwork completed. With its highly detailed graphics (shot on location in LA), Police Quest IV pulls no punches in presenting police work as it really is. Gritty, unpleasant and immensely frustrating. Have you got what it takes to be a 'good' cop?



The softly softly approach.



Door-to-door enquiries in the Land of the People with No Necks.

REALISM, SCHMEALISM

After Jim Walls (the creator of the previous games) went to rival software house Tsunami, Sierra approached retired LA police chief Daryl F Gates, who has worked on the Manson murders and the notorious Hillside Strangler case (nope I've never heard of it either) to help them with the development of the game. Using digital photography, Sierra has created an impressive looking game. Out go crude sprites and cartoon drawings and in come realistic images, autopsies and superb animation. Police Quest IV has more atmosphere and realism than bumper episodes of Hill Street Blues and The Bill put together.

VERDICT

Police Quest IV looks stunning and the photo-realistic graphics work very well. As for gameplay, PQIV is damned difficult. Miss one tiny bit of evidence, fail to mark a bullet hole and your whole investigation can grind to a frustrating and shuddering halt. But don't get me wrong, hard is good and if you consider yourself a bit of a Mr Adventure Head, PQIV will certainly present you with a challenge. It's a shame it doesn't have any speech but hey, you can't have everything can you?

DENIZ AHMET

Out now. Contact Sierra (0734 303322) for information.

WIN A 3DO!

A fantastic Panasonic REAL Multiplayer up for grabs!

1994 is the year of the new machines – 32 and 64-bit systems that make today's games machines look like Spectrums by comparison. One of the main contenders in the 32-bit marketplace is the 3DO, a CD-based monster that all the big software firms are producing for.

We ran a competition a couple of issues ago to give away one of these $700 super consoles, and response was so great that we decided we'd hand out another to one of our lucky readers! What a generous bunch we are, eh?

To be in with a chance of walking away with one of THE current hot properties in the videogaming world, simply answer the following questions:

1. Which company produces currently the only 3DO machine available?

2. Road Rash is a 3DO game in production – true or false?

3. Who created The 3DO Company? Was it:

a: Jack Hawkins?
b: Trip Hawkins?
c: Dr Stephen Hawkings?

Red Baron – coming soon to a 3DO near you!

Win the 3DO and you'll get Crash 'n' Burn free with the machine!

Once you've answered that trio, just complete the following tie-breaker in not more than 12 words:

TO GIVE MYSELF A BETTER CHANCE OF WINNING THE 3DO, I'D...

Jot down all this on a postcard or the back of a sealed-down envelope, add your name and address and post it off to:

OH GO ON, GIVE ME THE 3DO. I'LL DIE IF YOU DON'T, CVG, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU.

You wouldn't really want to buy Mad Dog McRee, as it's v. poor. But it's a nice picture, isn't it?

SMALL PRINT: Employees of EMAP Images or the families and friends are ineligible to enter. Please ensure that your entries reach us no later than 14 March 1994, otherwise it'll be 3 'Doh!'s for you when you don't win.

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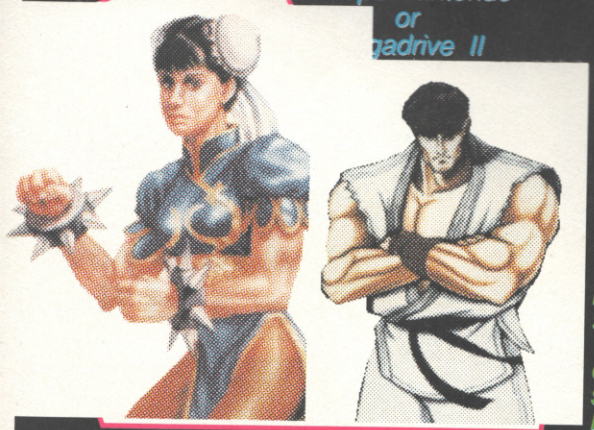

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Star Trek watch - tell the time in space!
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Calls cost 36p per min (cheap) 48p (other times). Max possible cost £3.60. Please be sure you have permission to make this call. Where Instant Win is indicated there is no tiebreaker and prizewinners are decided instantly by playing a deciding game. Other competitions close 31.5.94. All competitions involve multiple choice questions. Nintendo/Sega/Amiga/Gladiators & Star Trek are all registered trademarks of their respective companies. We are neither related to nor endorsed by them. For rules and winners' names please send SAE to Aladdin's Cave, PO Box 28, Northampton NN1 5DS.

ImagesMar

Out now. Contact Maxis (071-490 2333) for information.

Souped-up Sim City is here, bigger and better than its top-class daddy!

SIM CITY 2000

The wire-frame view shows that the plumbing has yet to be connected.

If you wanted to do a rundown on the most influential games ever to appear, then Sim City would be high on everybody's list. Your task was to build an entire city from scratch on a barren area of land. You decided when and where to build homes, shops, factories, leisure facilities and the like, and your decisions dictated the success or failure of your metropolis

Sim City was a huge success across the formats and now, Maxis has launched the sequel, initially available on Apple Macintosh with other incarnations to follow close behind.

Mayor maynot

The idea is to build a bustling community from nothing. Gameplay is similar to the original, but compared to 2000, Sim City looks positively ancient because there is a wider array of features. Many of your choices can be broken down to specific options – for example, clicking and holding down the industrial area icon brings

Aliens have landed! Select the top-right icon to activate the emergency services. Frankly, though, there's not much they can do.

FREE HOUSE!

The residents in your city don't just think of themselves all the time – they can show their gratitude for your building them a fine place to live. Once the population's reached 2,000, they club together to buy you a smart mansion. Since we're all snobs down here, we keep placing our mansions as far away from the common herd as possible. Unfortunately, the better the job you do, the more people will want to live in your city, which means that at some stage you'll have to build around your lovely home. Not only is the mansion a symbol of your success, it also shows the popularity of your term of office – click on it and you get a percentage score of your performance.

VERDICT

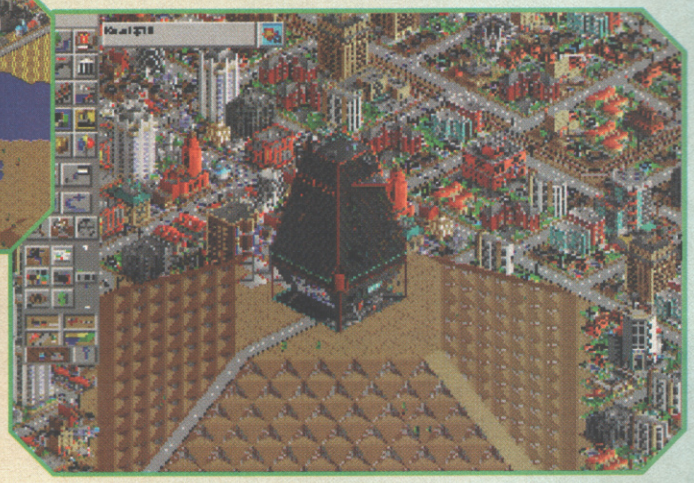
There's a staggering amount of options and features in Sim City 2000 which you can employ to keep your cities – and interest – ticking over for ages. Whereas each of the city-building icons in Sim City allowed you to perform only one action, in 2000 they're more like an index to an array of options. In fact, there's too much to talk about here. Graphics are an improvement, and you can zoom in and out now to get the best view of your handiwork. In short, Sim City 2000 is a superb title that's going to keep you hooked.

PAUL RAND

AIEEE! ALIENS!

You're sat in your office, when the door crashes down and gallons of floodwater rushes in. Yes, disasters have been included in Sim City 2000. Floods, earthquakes, fires, plane crashes, typhoons and even alien invasions are included, but in this version of Sim City you can combat them, providing you have created the appropriate emergency services. Just select the emergency icon and click on the area you want the police or fire services to go to – they'll drop everything and come running.

Only the early stages of city development. According to the bar graph in the icon panel, you're going to have a huge rise in industry.



Looks like something out of 2001: A Space Odyssey.

up the choice of light or heavy industry, and your choice can have a big impact upon the structure of your city?

Read all about it

Residents are never happy with their lot though, and will expect you to make various improvements – and if you want those taxes flowing into the city bank account, then it's wise to listen to what they have to say. The best way of monitoring the populace's wishes is to read the newspapers; to begin with there's only one paper available, but as the city grows more journals appear. At the end of each year, you are given a report detailing how well or badly you've done in cash terms, and allowing you to make alterations to the economic structure.

Whereas the original Sim City offered only the basic rate of income tax to be tinkered with, here you can add sales tax and other indirect taxation, including the legalisation of gambling which rakes in valuable dollars but encourages crime. Remember that, for every decision you make, there will be a reaction from the inhabitants of your city, be it positive or negative. ●

Click on a building to get a complete info breakdown.

Water-powered generators can only be built near waterfalls, but luckily you can build your own, such as this one.

VERDICT

Maxis has added a host of new features and options to Sim City 2000, as well as sticking to the same basic formula which made it a hit, to create a stimulating and addictive game. The ability to read the newspapers to gauge public opinion is a good idea, plus you now have a massive amount of control over your city's finances, letting you tax the populace. The graphics are more detailed than before. It may seem too similar to the original on the surface, but delve into Sim City 2000 and you'll find a fresh, highly addictive game.

DENIZ AHMET

PC

PROS: Involving gameplay, tons of options and improved graphics.
CONS: The game can run slowly at times.

GRAPHICS	Detailed and well animated, and an excellent zoom feature.	90%
SOUND	The tunes and samples are OK, but there's not nearly enough of them.	66%
GAMEPLAY	You think Sim City was engrossing? You ain't seen nothing yet!	94%
VALUE	For literally months of enjoyment, £40 is a small price to play.	94%

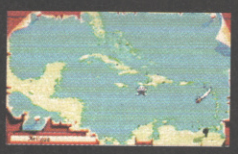
MISS OK HIT!

94

REVIEW | CD32 | by MICROPROSE | £24.99

Out now. Contact MicroProse (0666 504326) for information

PIRATES GOLD



Fathom your way round this strategy seven seas adventure...

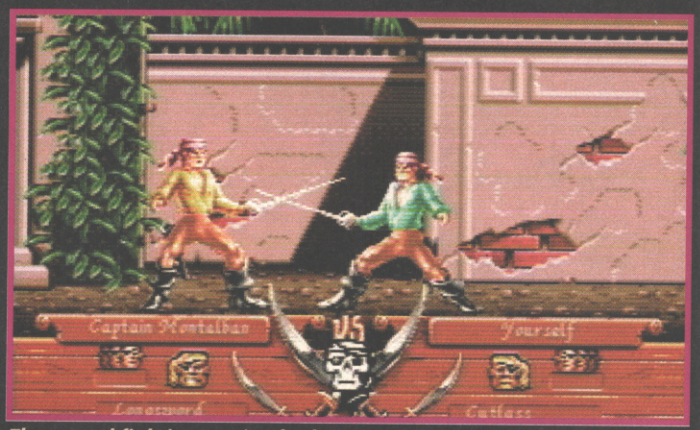
First off, don't confuse this with the absolutely dreadful NES version of Pirates. This is a different game, despite being crammed full of salty sea-dogs and released by the same company.

Set in the days when it was politically correct to flog miscreants over gun barrels and beat your servants, the aim of the game is to take your ship and kill, maim and trade your way around the West Indies. If you've been a particularly good captain you'll be awarded with commissions from the Navy and a chance of carving a name for yourself in history.

In many ways Pirates is very much like Elite on the ocean waves. Like that game you start off with a ship, a small amount of money and no real idea as to what to do next. From there on in you can decide to become a buccaneering type, running riot on the high seas freeing trading ships of their cargo and turning over remote outposts.

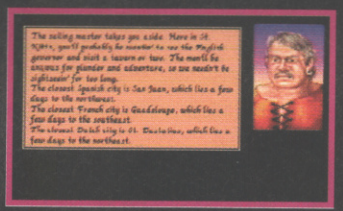
Mutiny Mr Christian

If things are going well for you, it's worth ditching your ship for something a bit better. When you've got your hands on something with more guns than sails you can team up with the local Navy and take part in battles. The problem is that the larger the crew you have, the greater the chance of a mutiny.



The sword fighting section looks passable, until you see it moving. It's very slow and the animation is not up to scratch.

In this section, which looks a wee bit like Monkey Island, you get to explore the town you're in.



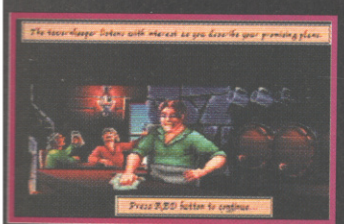
A gentleman tells you where to go and what to see.

Click on the scenery to find out where to go next.

Huzzah and have at you!

Despite the use of cannons, ship-to-ship combat always ends up with you trying to shish-kebab the opposing captain with your sword. There are three weapons for this job: rapier, a sword and a cutlass. The rapier has the longest reach, but it doesn't do much damage it can turn the scurviest salt-water jock into a variety of cutlets – just right for the hungry native.

Shock! Horror! An FMV-style intro.

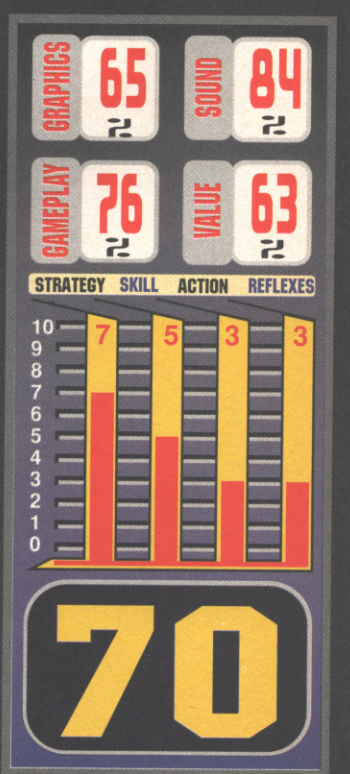


Taverns are good for information.

VERDICT

As much as I like open games like this, where you can basically sort out your own tactics and strategy, Pirates Gold tries to do too much without the substance to back it up. Technically this sucks like a granny with a Murray Mint, but the biggest travesty has to be the fight sequences. The graphics and animation are awful, which is a shame seeing as the CD32 is 32-bit with 256 colours. Little technical failings such as this bring down the gameplay, which, after a few goes, isn't as strong as it first seems.

RIK SKEWS



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Deniz Ahmet -
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Deniz Ahmet -
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"OOZES ATMOSPHERE AND LOTS OF BLOOD"
Chris Buxton-
TOTAL MAGAZINE-
Jan 94

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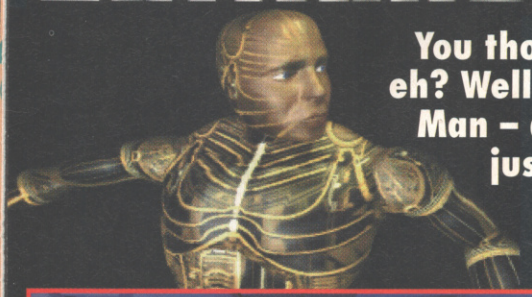
REVIEW

PC CD-ROM | by SALES CURVE | £54.99

Out now. Contact Sales Curve Interactive (071-585 3308) for information.

Lawnmower Man



You thought Rebel Assault was good, eh? Well wait until you see Lawnmower Man – and there's one helluva game just bursting to get out too!

CD-ROM software seems to be striding ahead when it comes to the PC and certainly there doesn't seem to be anything like Scavenger 4 from Psygnosis around, apart from this quality offering from the Sales Curve – Lawnmower Man.

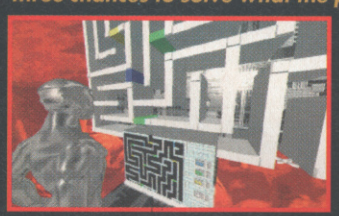
The puzzles get quite complex deeper in the game. You're given three chances to solve what the poser.

Qualcast man

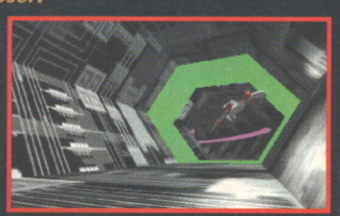
First a bit of plot. Cyberjobe, a virtual reality incarnation of a gardener, thinks he's been betrayed by his creator, Dr Angelo, and so has zapped the Dr plus his assistants, Peter and Carla, into his virtual world. They have been suspended in decaying spheres, and only by finding two decrypton units (I hope you're following this) can they be set free. You have to help them escape by taking on the role of Dr. Angelo as you try and escape back to actual reality.

After the long introduction the game commences with its full-screen action. What you get here is 12 distinct types of game, some of which are action based, like tunnel shoot-'em-ups, and others which are puzzle-based, like a Vortex Bridge where you have to outwit an invisible opponent in getting across without landing on the same tile. However, there are a number of such stages which reoccur at intervals with a harder setting, so you end up with quite a large game of 30 odd stages.

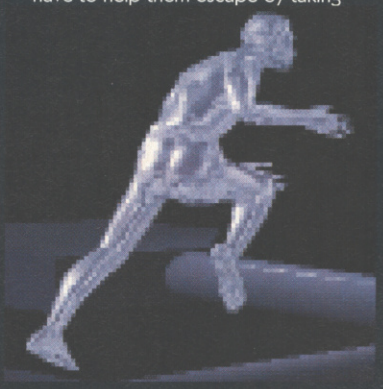
Controls are simple and of the cursor key type, so you get an

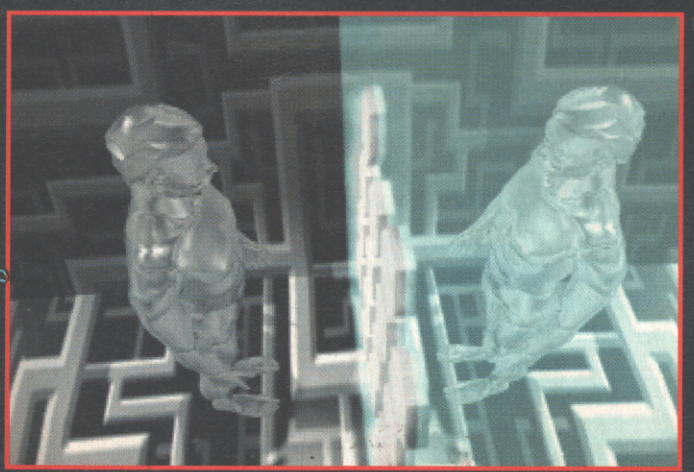


There are quite a few maze type puzzles to sort out.

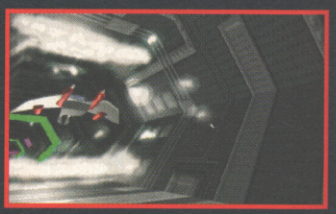


Different paths provide different routes through the game.

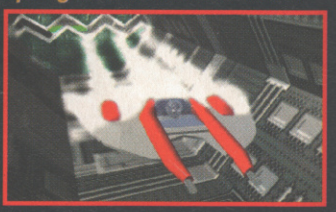




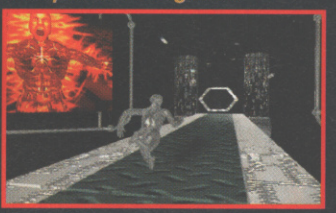
Tap out the combination to access the next stage of the game.



There are dangers which spring from sections of walls.



Flying through tunnels is a shoot-'em up affair. One of the best parts of the game.

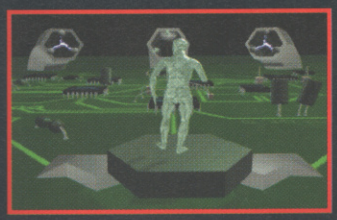


One of the stages that is repeated has you hurdling dangers.

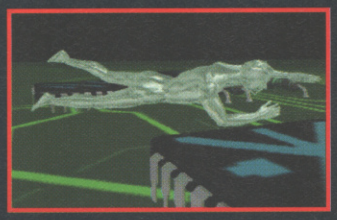
VERDICT

This is easily the best movie tie-in yet on PC. The graphics are spectacular, and shift at a pace which defies their complexity. Most of the animation has been rendered from different view points so it's likely to be different each time you play. The game itself is a collection of 12 stages, which blend activity and puzzle tasks like an episode of Crystal Maze. Gasp at our screen shots and go get this, it's even got some ambient dance tracks from Steve Hillage whose credits include The Orb. Far out.

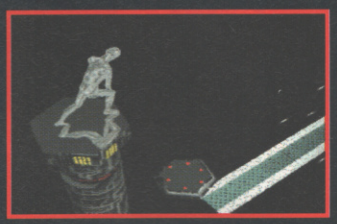
DENIZ AHMET



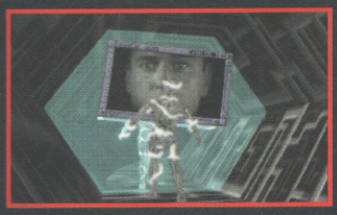
A puzzle: which exit should our man take...



Once you decide, follow the circuit board paths to the exit.

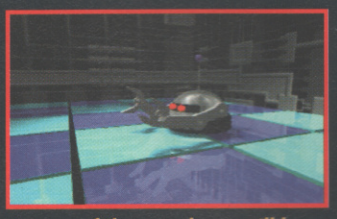


Time your jumps well for those moving platforms below.



FMV footage plays in the background on most levels.

Different camera angles are continuous in this game.



In one of the puzzles you'll have to guide this robot blindly.

instantly playable experience for anyone. Initially, you get a female commentator who guides you through with instructions on the fly. But you're left by yourself after a few stages, so if you make a mistake during any task, you get three chances to do it right, and there's a number of brilliant death sequences to watch if you don't.

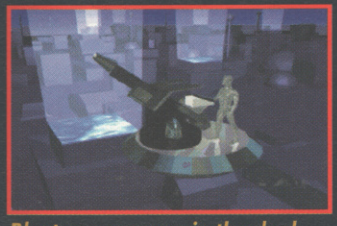
Access granted

Cyberjobe has also placed clones of people from his memory banks in his virtual domain, and they are all are out to stop you, and it's not uncommon for Jobe to give chase in the tunnel sections. If you can balance your reflexes and mental ability well then you'll do love Lawnmower Man.

When you solve puzzles you get an animated reward.

Guide the bees through a maze and into a spinning fan which will shred them in a nicely animated sequence.

Puzzles are always easy for you to spot.



Blast your enemy in the duel.

VERDICT

While Lawnmower Man does have a lot of 'sit-back-and-watch' animation it comes as your reward (as with Virgin's Seventh Guest) for solving the 30 odd puzzles and challenges which are presented. Visually, it's stunning with 360 degree cinematic pans and heaps of film footage laid over the scenery. There's going to be two versions of the game: a 256 colour version for double-speed drive owners and a 32 colour affair for single speed drives – so check the packaging! And I'll just add the packaging is possibly the best box we've seen in ages.

PAUL RAND

PC CD-ROM

PROS: The most creative animated game for ages and very atmospheric.

CONS: Some stages are repeated which can become dull.

GRAPHICS	All the best effects from the film. Different view angles and FMV.	97%
SOUND	Atmosphere overload. Superb sounds and foot stomping beats.	97%
GAMEPLAY	Surprisingly playable. Lots of variety but repetitive tasks.	83%
VALUE	Lasts longer than most CD games. But once you know what to do...	80%

MISS HIT!

88

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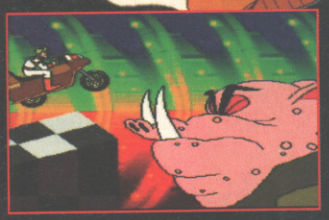

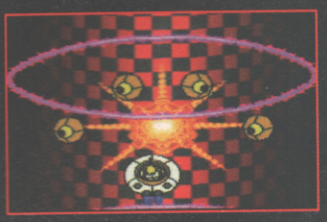

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Yes, you can be the proud owner of a top-of-the-range Honda go-kart by entering our compo...

You all know we at CVG love go-karting, and now you can get to grips with the sport yourself. Honda UK and top motor-sport outfit Anderson-CSK have got together to offer you the chance to win your own Cadet Class Kart to celebrate the launch of the new Junior League for 14-16 year olds.

Equipped with two Honda Four Stroke 4HP GX 120 power units and an ultra-stylish body, this mean machine can rocket along at a heady 45mph. Not only that, but you also win the full kartin' kit: boots, gloves, suit and helmet, and your tuition is thrown in for free. You never know, if you're any good you might end up in the Junior league yourself!

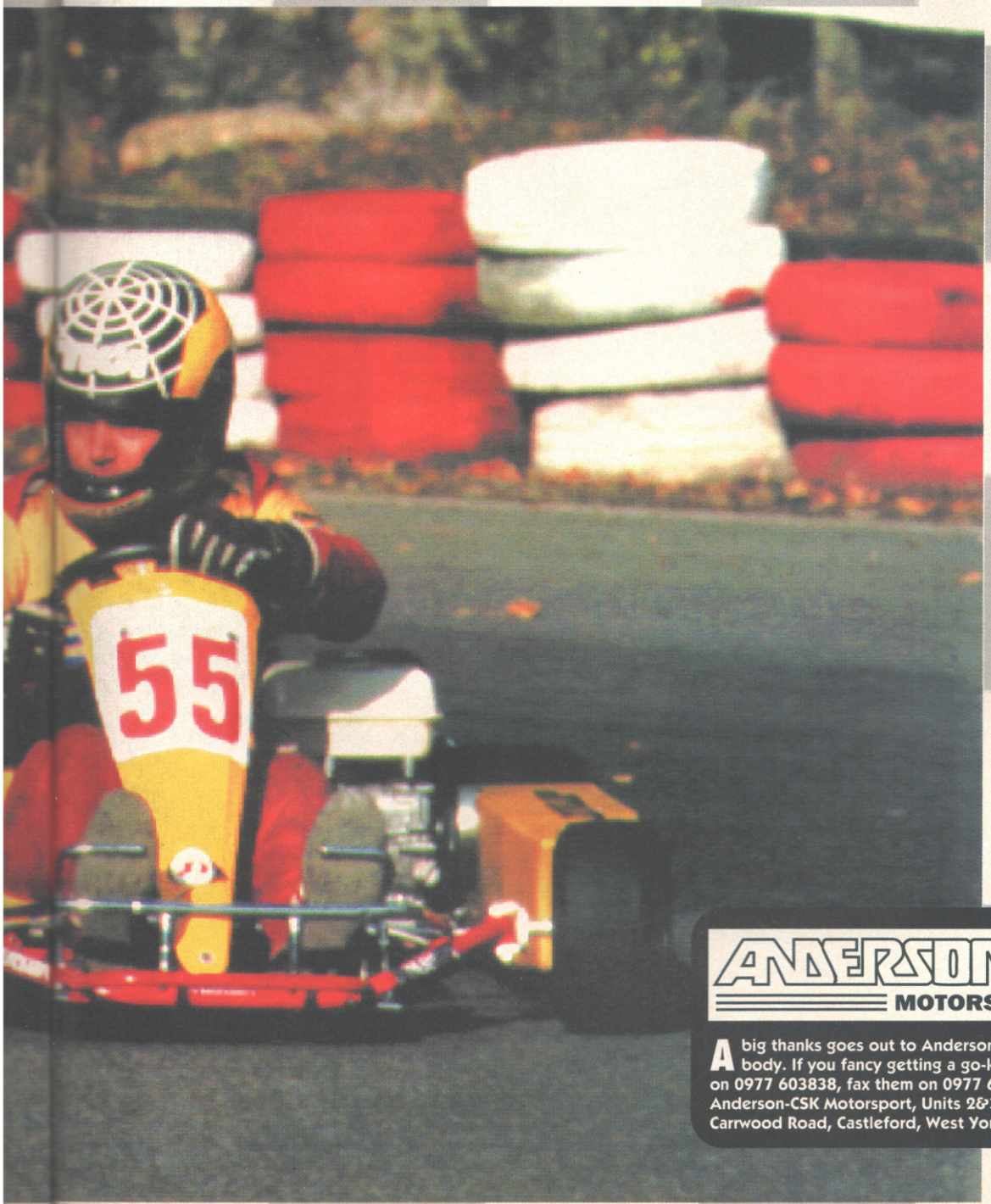
Get going

All you have to do to win is design a kart which would be perfect for the CVG team. It can contain anything you like, but remember, we like games, food, drink and fluffy dice, so if you could include such features and anything else then that would be reet grand.

When you've got the kart to end all karts, send it in to Kart In the Act Komp, CVG, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. All entries must be in by 14 March 1994. The competition is open to all ages, but if you're under 18 you've got to get your entry signed by your parent or guardian. Oh, and employees (and their friends and family) of the companies involved in the compo can't enter, so there.

WN GO-KART!

D TO RACE AND TRAINING!



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A big thanks goes out to Anderson-CSK Motorsport for donating the body. If you fancy getting a go-kart of your own, give them a ring on 0977 603838, fax them on 0977 603839 or write to them at Anderson-CSK Motorsport, Units 2&3, Sterling Industrial Park, Carrwood Road, Castleford, West Yorkshire WF10 4PS.

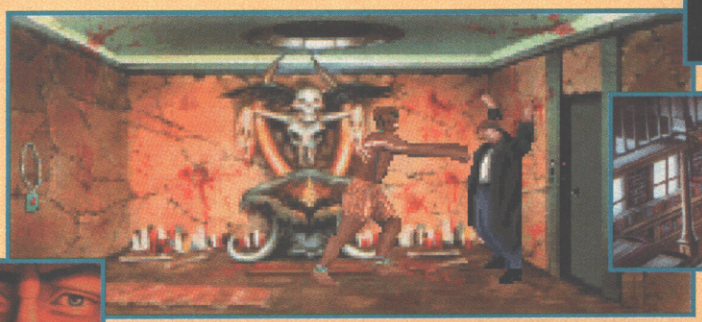
REVIEW

PC\PC CD-ROM | by SIERRA | £39.99/£44.99

Out now. Contact Sierra (0734 303171) for information.

GABRIEL KNIGHT
Sins of the Fathers

Forget Larry Laffer and Roger Wilco, Sierra's latest hero is the smoothest guy in town...



When a guy is seven-feet tall and built like a brick outbuilding, you shouldn't mess with him, a lesson Gabriel's about to learn to his cost.

Things start to go horribly wrong when Gabriel sneaks into a Voodoo ceremony.

Gabriel Knight loves his hair. Despite being horrendously in debt, he still manages to spend vast amounts of cash on mousses, gels, shampoos, conditioners... you name it, he's got it. Take two bottles into the shower? Gabriel takes nine. Still, if it's getting him dates with the hottest babes in New Orleans, who can blame him?

New Orleans, old magic

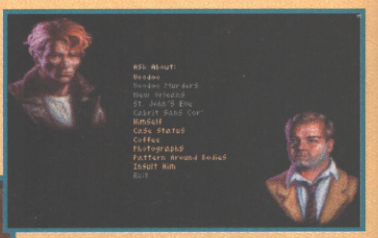
The game is set in New Orleans, where Gabriel is trying to pursue a career as a novelist. After reading about a series of brutal killings which seem to be linked with Voodoo, Gabriel decides to write a book on the subject. As he goes about researching his novel, Gabriel gets drawn into a dangerous world where death waits around every corner. A mysterious heiress has been linked to the killings, and matters are complicated further when Gabriel falls for her. Unknown to him, a Voodoo goddess has placed a curse on his family, and as the game progresses he starts to discover his sinister past.

Gory story

It has been billed as an adult game because there's some bad language, and there are some gory moments – definitely not one for the squeamish. The sinister atmosphere and strong characters make it a compelling and involving game to play, and there's also a fair bit of humour thrown in for some light relief.

Gabriel suffers from bad dreams in a big way. Didn't I warn you about eating cheese before you go to bed?

You get a lot of clues from talking to people. Here Gabe shoots the breeze with his old pal, Detective Mosely.

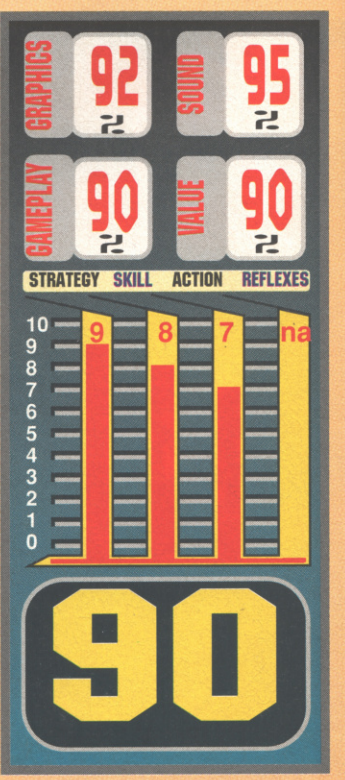


The St George Bookshop is Gabriel's home and business. Climbing the ladder is just a cheap excuse to look down Grace's blouse.

Malia Gedde is the rich and beautiful heiress Gabriel's investigating. Will she get him into trouble?

Gabriel takes time to visit his gran, who's probably the only woman in New Orleans he won't try to get off with.

Willy Walker's drug store sells all sorts of weird voodoo gear. Perhaps you can get some useful items here.



VERDICT

Gabriel Knight is the most enjoyable adventure I've played since Monkey Island, and it's certainly the best thing that Sierra has done. The graphics are good and the music is brilliant, but what makes the game is the plot. It's like reading a thriller; you're never sure what's going to happen next, and it keeps you on the edge of your seat right up until the end. It's also pretty tough, and should keep you entertained for a good bit longer than most adventures. If you want a really intriguing, exciting game, look no further.

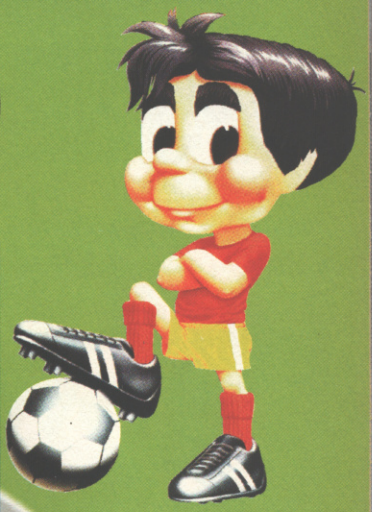
RIK SKEWS

REVIEW

A1200 | by KRISALIS | £29.99

Out now. Contact Krisalis (0709 372290) for information.

SOCCER KID



After last month's away treat on the SNES, Soccer Kid's back on home ground, this time on the super Amiga 1200

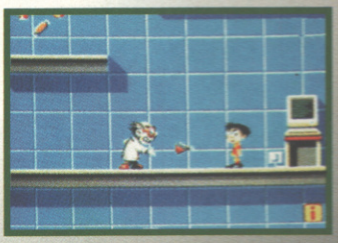
The World Cup's been stolen by aliens orbiting the Earth. However, before zooming into space they were hit by a meteorite which broke the World Cup into five pieces dotted around the globe. Only Soccer Kid is smart enough to get it back.

The sledders aren't too friendly so avoid them by climbing the tall trees.

Kick-off

The game is platform based and if you collect the 11 football cards on each scene a bonus level is entered where Soccer Kid must collect all the pick-ups before the time expires. If all the bonuses are collected then a cup piece is his reward. If you don't manage to collect everything don't worry, you won't see the full end sequence that's all.

Soccer Kid's trump card (what makes it a Premier League platformer) is his football, which can be used in many ways to aid him through the game. For instance bouncing off it allows you to reach higher bonuses and platforms. Trick shots can be used to dispense baddies and the more accurate your dribbling and footie skills the bigger your bonuses.



Farmer Giles is your foe, so slam a footie right in his face.

This is Derek, he's dangerous is Derek.

Sensible soccer

The only difference between this and the standard version is the graphics are smoother and more colourful (it still takes an hour to load though). Who'd have thought you could have created the perfect blend between the platform and football game genres? Krisalis, that's who!

IT'S THE KID

Lex Luther has overtaken Metropolis' city hall – what do you do? You call Superman. Gotham City is being plagued by the Penguin – you send in Batman. The World Cup has been stolen by aliens, who you gonna call? Soccer Kid that's who.

VERDICT

Soccer Kid on the A1200 is like the other versions. In other words it's brilliant. The idea of controlling a football as well as leaping and bounding over the platforms could have been a disaster, but thankfully it's been implemented well and takes no time at all to pick-up. Graphics are finely detailed and the sound FX and music add atmosphere to the jaunty and lasting gameplay. Hardly essential if you've got the original, but for new year A1200 owners out there this one's a priority.

RIK SKEWS

REVIEW

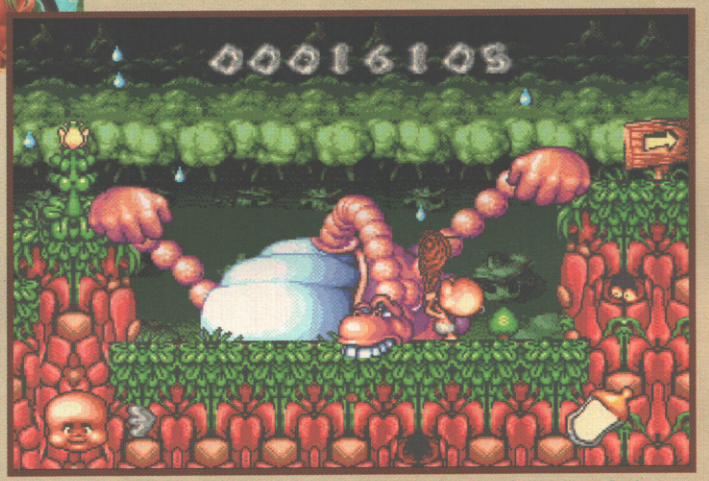
MEGA CD | by CORE DESIGN | £44.99

Out now. Contact Core (0332 297717) for information.

CHUCK ROCK II

SON OF CHUCK

With a cartoon introduction that even Walt would be proud of, has this Mega-CD got any room left for gameplay?



The bosses are actually a high point of the game thanks to their creative animation. As usual, you have to bash them on the head.

If there's one thing you expect from a CD game it's lastability, and one good way to achieve this is plenty of levels. Now I realise the prehistoric era wasn't a particularly dynamic time, but I would have thought that with a little imagination the programmers would have been able to stretch beyond the rather lazy sum of six levels. Now the other problem of course, which makes the first one worse, is that Chuck 2 is rather easy. Initially, because the levels are quite compact for a CD game, but more to do with the simple puzzles you face.

There's lots of clever parallax in Chuck II.

Another boss appears. Tip: don't stay in one place for long.

Chuck's club is his only weapon. It is actually very effective.

Jump into the tree to drop the apples for a bonus.

As Chuck Jnr, the quest to rescue your old man brings few demands on a player's skill, being restricted to merely dodging falling scenery and avoiding spikes.

Sure, there's some enemy clubbing action in there, which is made fun by a well-animated and humourous character sprite, but the enemy lacks any intelligence. Additionally, the realisation that there are no power-ups to be found anywhere, make the idea of being stuck with your common or garden caveman club quite unenthusiastic.

Chuck doesn't take kindly to hidden objects popping up.

Chuck can actually get away with falling long distances.

Nothing new here

Chuck Jnr can climb on his stick to avoid ground dangers and bash through some scenery (for sake of secret passages), but these features aren't really put to creative use, and are used rarely. Ultimately, it's a case of cosmetic improvements over the important one of gameplay for Chuck II.

VERDICT

The incredibly long, and superb cartoon intro to Chuck II promises a lot. Then the game starts, and if you turn down the CD soundtrack there's nothing to suggest this is a CD game. Sound familiar? Chuck II is obviously aimed at the younger player. It's too easy and predictable, and six levels isn't going to challenge the mature player. The bosses and likeable Chuck Jnr sprite save the game's appeal, but it still feels like a cartridge game. It's fun to play, but pay with someone else's money.

DENIZ AHMET

GRAPHICS	80%
SOUND	77%
GAMEPLAY	68%
VALUE	40%

STRATEGY	SKILL	ACTION	REFLEXES
3	3	5	6

75

REVIEW

SNES | by KONAMI | £TBA

Out March. Contact Konami (0895 853000) for information.

TWINBEE RAINBOW BELL ADVENTURE

Collecting bells is your objective. A lot of them are hidden so bash walls to find them.

Konami is about to release its latest Twinbee game staring Twinbee, who has become something of a mascott for the software giants

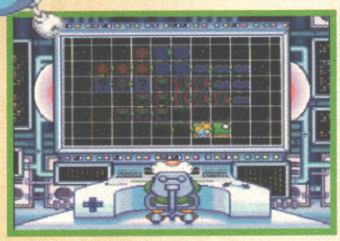
As the first Twinbee platform game this marks something of a departure from the shoot-'em-ups that are usually associated with the character, such as Parodius and Pop 'n' Twinbee.

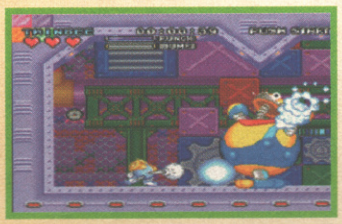
Anyone who's played a Twinbee game before will remember that the object is to collect bells. And in Rainbow Bell Adventure the idea is much the same but you also have to shoot ding-dongs (whatever they are) left by dead baddies which will activate different power-ups specified by colours.

Hold my hand

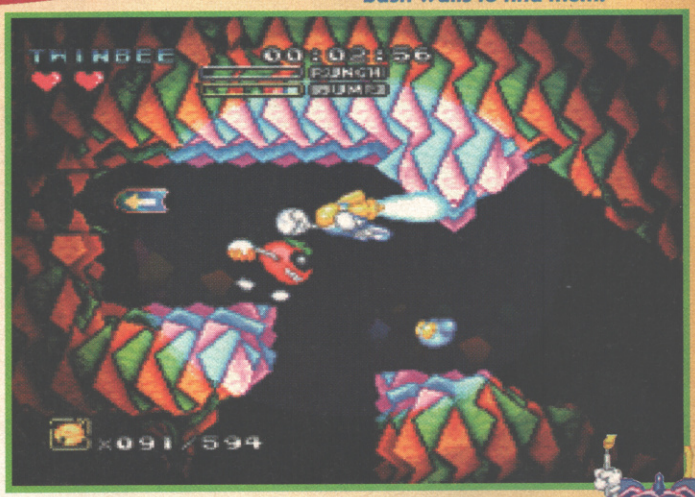
Apart from the various ramps and hills which make the game as fast and dangerous as Accolade's Bubsy, Twinbee has nifty physical abilities like a charged punch and propelled flight. Both of these will destroy anything in their path if fully charged and must also be used to smash through camouflaged parts of scenery to discover yet more bells.

In two player mode players choose two other Twinbee lookers. Each has their own special weapon, but it all gets frustrating if you don't work as a team. Any player can go off the screen without the other, so someone always gets left wandering blindly. The split screen option offers you a battle-mode to smash each other up a bit, which has very limited appeal and is irrelevant to the main game anyway, so why is it there?





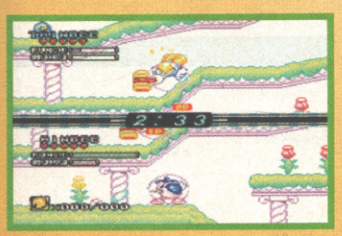
The bosses are far too easy.



When you charge up your power you can fly, killing objects in your path.

Bashing walls is very important for finding little fairies.

There's two new characters in this with all new powers.



In the split screen mode, rush around and bash each other.

VERDICT

The switch to a platform from shoot-'em-up for Twinbee hasn't come off badly at all. Familiar aspects like the power-up bells have been retained and the 'cute' factor is still evident. However, in one player mode it all gets a bit dull because the gameplay lacks imagination. There just isn't enough interaction with the scenery in puzzle terms and that's not good for a platform game. Two player mode is much better, but even then you've got to work as a team to get anywhere.

DENIZ AHMET

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	VALUE
82%	69%	79%	78%

STRATEGY	SKILL	ACTION	REFLEXES
3	4	7	5

81

REVIEW

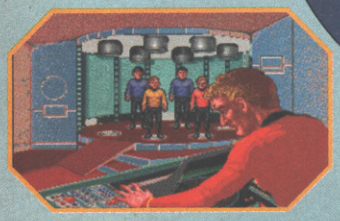
PC | by INTERPLAY | £45.99

Out now. For more information contact Interplay (0865 390029)

Kirk, Spock and Bones boldly go where they've gone before in the sequel to the highly successful Star Trek 25th Anniversary

STAR TREK 2
JUDGEMENT RITES

Kirk and crew are tested by a powerful race of green bushes.



Why does the guy in the red always, always die? Why?

Danger for the USS Enterprise as a friendly starship explodes.

"Space... the final frontier." Those four legendary words inspire tidal waves of emotion. Who could forget William 'Kirk' Shatner and his countless snogs? Bones' and Spock's endless bickering? Yes for most of us Star Trek is a fond memory and this is precisely why the first Trekkie adventure on PC sold so well.

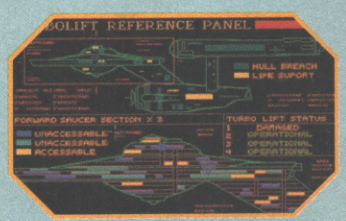
Set phasers to stun

Judgment Rites (or Star Trek 2 if you like) carries on the fine Interplay tradition of point-and-click adventuring. Like the original, Judgement Rites is split into eight, self-contained adventures that mix puzzle solving and a bit of deep space combat. In each episode you control Captain Kirk and together with Bones, Spock and the Enterprise faithful you must solve quirky puzzles, beat off alien biplanes and be good, trustworthy and honest.

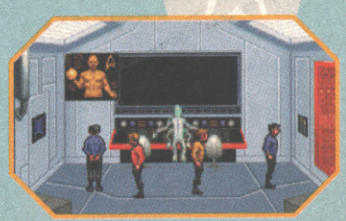
Fascinating Captain

Unlike Star Trek 25th Anniversary, Judgement Rites has a subtle subplot that binds and links all the episodes together, and it's all a bit unbelievable... A powerful alien race called the Brassica has decided before it comes out of hiding and says a big 'hi' to the universe, it wants to test all the races currently cruising the spaceways. Naturally Kirk and the Enterprise have been chosen and they must overcome all the trials of courage and intelligence that the Brassica can chuck at them. If they don't they die. It's as simple as that.

Featuring full-screen action, nice animation and even the voice of William Shatner himself in the intro, Judgement Rites is a good addition to the adventure stable. It isn't a Day of the Tentacle, but with the stirring music and the familiar characters, it's got atmosphere, but not as we know it, Jim.



Remember the turbo-lift? Take a ride and you can go up, down and even sideways. Fabulous.



Once again aliens have taken control. Oh for some peace!

WARP FACTOR THREE MR SULU

As Interplay has acquired the licence from Paramount to produce games based on the original series, you can not only play Star Trek 25th Anniversary and Judgement Rites, but you can also begin to drool and look forward to Starfleet Academy – the next scheduled Star Trek game. In fact if you're quick you can dash out and get the limited edition of Judgement Rites, which comes in a smart black box with a copy of Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan.

This year will also hopefully see the release of Star Trek TNG on PC CD-ROM and 3DO. Featuring photorealistic characters and movie-like action this looks really special.

Escape from your cell by using the old set-fire-to the-straw trick.

VERDICT

Judgement Rites is as good as, if not better than the original 25th Anniversary game. Guiding Kirk, Spock and Bones from death-scrape to alien encounter brings back all those memories of the series. But although it's a 'good' game it's far from being a 'great' game. Interplay has done nothing new bar revamping the graphics and giving you eight new stories. In fact it could almost be an expensive mission disk. Also it's all a bit too easy, and I would worry how long it's all going to last. But, hey, if you love Star Trek do you care?

RIK SKEWS

REVIEW

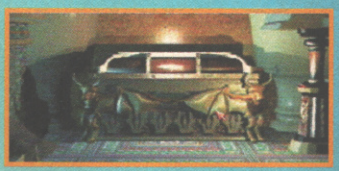
CD32 | by ELECTRONIC ARTS | £24.99

Out now. Contact Electronic Arts (0753 549442) for information.

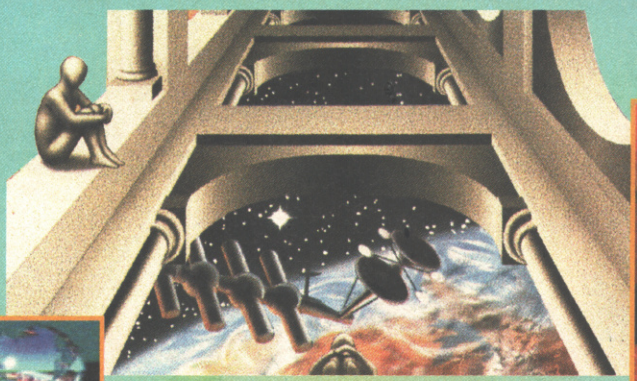
THE LABYRINTH OF TIME

Mindscape's Liberation showed what a good maze-type game should be; was Labyrinth paying attention?

Labyrinth offers some spectacular graphics, but unfortunately they don't scroll.

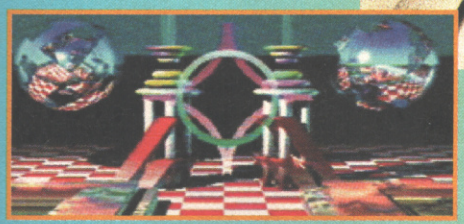


One of the few animated sequences in the game. That coffin will swing open.



The puzzles in this are straight forward once you find the correct object.

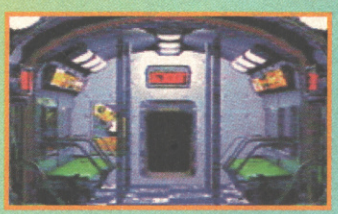
Go inside his mouth for a confusing maze of mirrors. Use your map to help you out.



These look good but don't actually offer any use which is the problem with this game.

From the packaging you'd think Labyrinth to be a stunning graphic adventure, not unlike Virgin's Seventh Guest. Your initial excitement soon collapses however, when you begin to move the cursor and discover this game is little more than a gallery show. Yep, the graphics don't scroll - they simply refresh when it comes to every new scene. What's more, each scene has to be loaded in, so there's a frustrating pause while data gets shifted.

The object of the game is to destroy the labyrinth before it extends to consume time and space. You do this by solving puzzles of the 'collect A to achieve B and activate C' variety. The trouble is, there's too much emphasis placed on the exploration angle. This means that every room needs to be examined in detail, looking at objects, moving objects and opening other objects (but that's all you can do by the way). The end result is a tiresome trudge with trial and error gameplay. There isn't much here to interact with at all.



You start in the subway train with two exits to the game.

Round in circles

Your travels are helped by the automatic mapping option which helps you out of disoriented situations (which are quite often). You can also use elevators, transporters and the subway to enter other dimensions which gives some depth.

Labyrinth is unlikely to appeal to the majority. Adventure fans will find it embarrassing in mental terms, while your average player will be frustrated by the slow pace of the action. ●

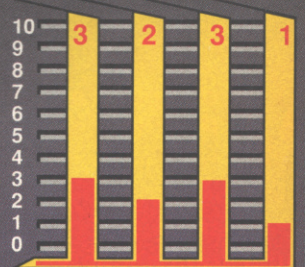
VERDICT

There used to be a time when maze games didn't scroll. These days most of them do. Not so with Labyrinth however, and this limits the game's interactive quality. Perhaps CD32 isn't technically up to scrolling images of this quality, but you still expect it. The best thing about the game is the atmospheric music, because the gameplay is actually very dull, with little to do apart from explore. You can never seem to do what you want, which is partly due to design, but more to do with the lack of icons at your disposal. Stick to Liberation I'd say.

DENIZ AHMET

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	VALUE
80 %	80 %	30 %	40 %

STRATEGY	SKILL	ACTION	REFLEXES
3	2	3	1



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GREAT COVERAGE

You spend ages choosing the right PC; the machine which delivers the best performance for money, one which can keep you ahead of the crowd, and most importantly, a machine which you can be proud of owning.

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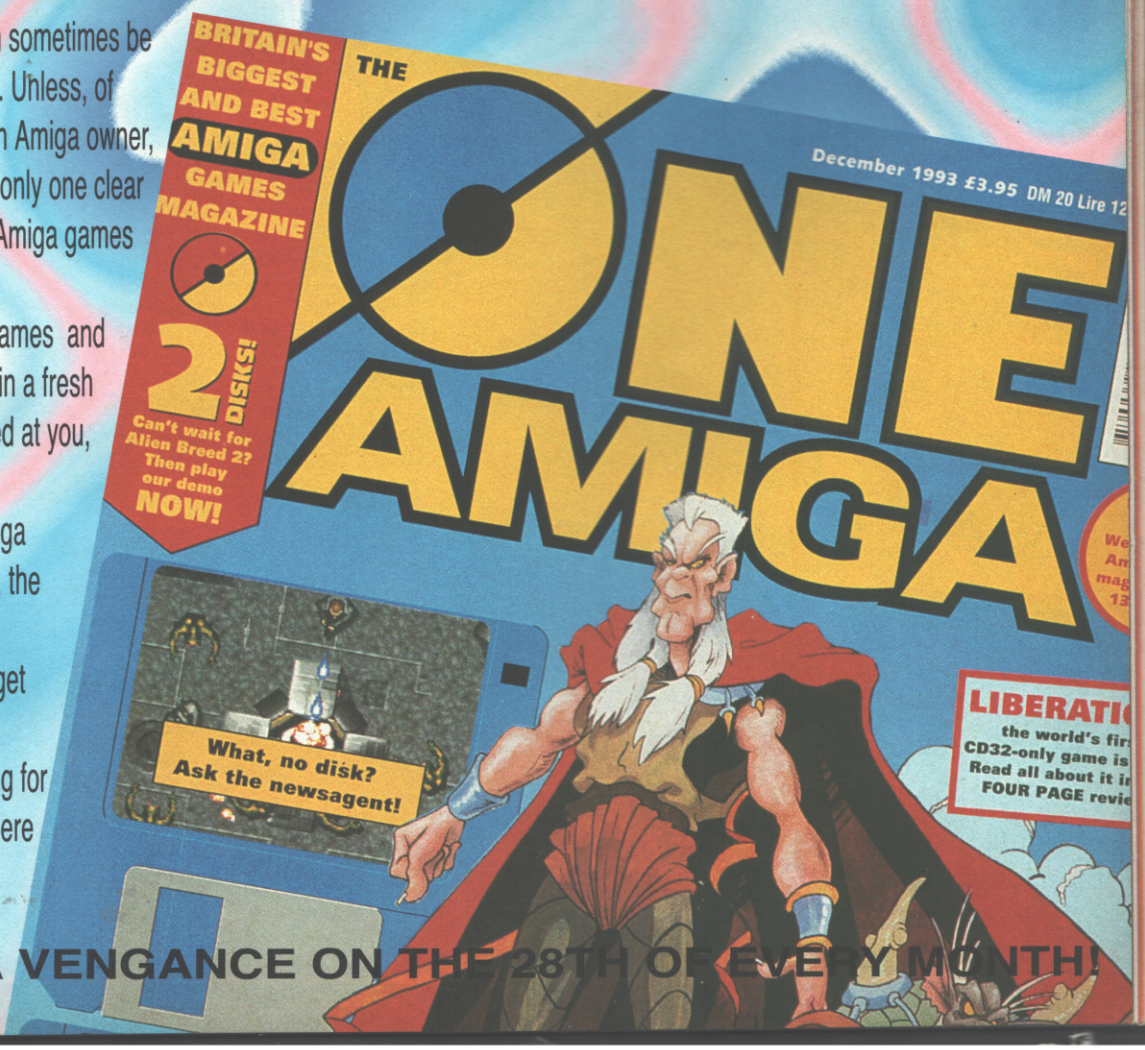


OUT WITH A VENGANCE ON THE 28TH OF EVERY MONTH!

REVIEW

CD32 ▶ by MINDSCAPE ▶ £24.99

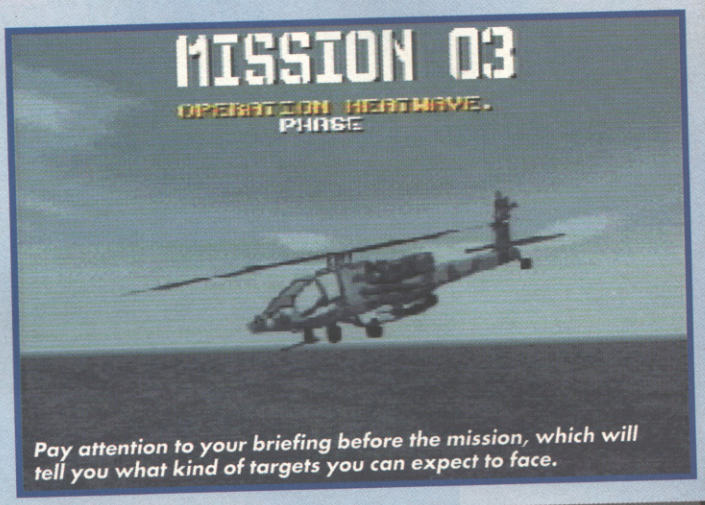
SEEK AND DISTROY

Armed with a hi-tech 'copter and plenty of missiles, only you can save your country. Or can you...

You can land at any time during the game to avoid enemy fire, but a mission's only complete when you land at your base.

Whoops, you should have listened to your co-pilot.

Next to enemy helicopters, your greatest threat comes from Surface To Air Missiles.



Pay attention to your briefing before the mission, which will tell you what kind of targets you can expect to face.

When terrorist scum rear their heads and threaten the peace-loving democracies, what do the governments of the world do? They give you a massive great helicopter, as much as ammo as you can carry, and let you get on with the job in hand.

Before each mission you get a rough briefing, which basically amounts to 'find the terrorists and kill them'– who needs woolly liberals, eh? To make the job easier there's a radar at the bottom of the screen which shows the location of the terrorists and your base.

The terrorists, alert to your presence, have pooled their resources and gathered together a massive

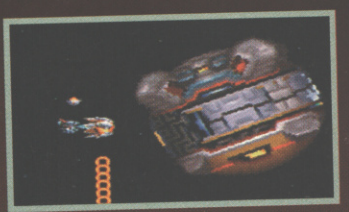
REVIEW

SNES ▶ OUT ON IMPORT ▶ £60-70

R-TYPE III

A shoot-'em-up with backwards scrolling graphics? Yes , the game which coined the term 'shoot-'em-up' has returned in a new improved incarnation...

Super R-Type on the SNES was one of the first titles to be released on the machine. It was a blinding conversion of the second R-Type coin-op, but suffered immensely from jerky slow down. This was made worse by the fact that the older PC-Engine version had none of these problems, and is still the best conversion of that coin-op. So you had all these proud new SNES owners put to shame by a console the size of a matchbox.



A lot of the bosses feature excellent Mode 7 rotational effects, unlike previous R-Types.

No go slow

Times have changed though, and programmers have learned a thing or two about the SNES, so with R-Type III the first thing which has to be said is that there is no slow-down problem. The graphics have also been improved in definition, the scrolling

All those familiar weapon add-ons are here again. However, the death of baddies is far more graphic and dramatic.

You can now select from three awesome weapon systems.

well stocked army with the specific aim of sending you home in a great many charred pieces. To prevent this, your 'copter is armed with air-to-air missiles, air-to-ground missiles, a vast number of rockets and a generous supply of napalm to use on ground troops.

Your Radar shows you the location of enemy bases.

There are so many weapon pick-ups in the game that you should never run out of ammo.

Spin me round

The gameplay is based on a system called Rotoscoping, where your helicopter remains static on the screen while the landscape rotates around it. This system has been used in other games, such as Super Contra, and does take some getting used to.

When you've been through the basic 14 missions, you're taken back to the start, only this time with more enemies, who are better shots and react quicker. Enemy missiles are also more accurate and a hell of a lot quicker. Even though your helicopter is protected by armour, a few direct hits will do a fair amount of damage. A display in the bottom-left of the screen shows your status, and if things get hairy your co-pilot lets out a sampled yell telling you to get out.

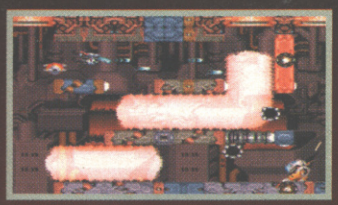
Bottom left shows you status.

VERDICT

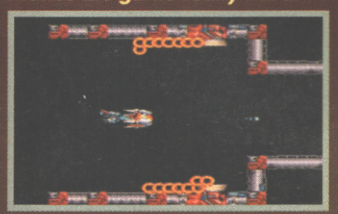
Desert Strike this isn't, but enjoyable it is. There are no CD-specific thrills, just a very simple, fun shoot-'em-up. All you're asked to do is point your helicopter in the right direction and fire. There's plenty to see and shoot and the later levels are very tough indeed. The only beef I have with this game is the price. There's not enough in the game to justify the price tag. A tenner less and this would have been a worthwhile purchase, but in its current form it's just not worth the asking price.

RIK SKEWS

Out now. Contact Mindscape (0444 246333) for information.



For R-Type III nearly all the baddies have been given a level of intelligence which makes the game really hard.

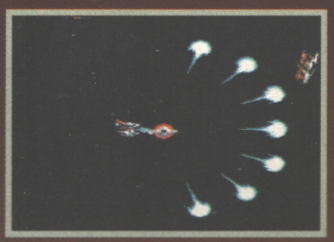


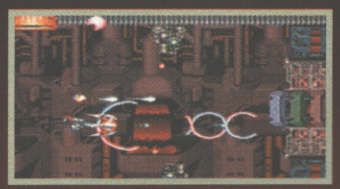
This tunnel section will begin to rotate which requires nifty manoeuvrability.

parallax is more layered than ever, and there's some fancy Mode 7 rotational stuff appearing on bosses and tunnel sections. Baddies also swarm out from clunks of scenery so there's a surprise element too.

While unmistakably R-Type, there are some essential improvements to previous elements. The main two being some intelligence among the baddies and three weapon systems to choose from at the start. That old trick of hiding in the corner when you've got a multi-directional weapon isn't going to work here.

You'll find plenty of levels in R-Type III, and they're certainly not easy - even with unlimited continues.





Aliens now appear from behind bits of parallax scenery.

VERDICT

R-Type is more of the same, just more technically refined. Gone is the slow-down, the jerky graphics and unintelligent baddies. In are three new weapon system defaults, lashings of bolt-on weapons and clever Mode 7 effects which are part of the gameplay. The ideas in this are not new, but who's to say that old ideas are bad, especially when they can be crafted into a game as playable as this? R-Type III is smart, but not as spectacular as you would expect, and why no two-player option?

DENIZ AHMET

Out on import: Contact Machine Shack (081-769 6401) for information.

REVIEW

SNES | by SONY | £44.99

Out March. Contact Sony (071-734 5151) for information.

Sky Blazer is another typically Japanese 'hero' game, except this one crams in a drastic assortment of game styles

SKY BLAZER

If the world was a peaceful place then half the world's games wouldn't have a plot. Now with Sky Blazer being set in the mystical era of the ancient gods, peace becomes something for which you have to battle with the evil forces of darkness for, and predictably save a princess in the process.

Top geezer

Blazer himself is a likable character, able to let loose with a text-book combination of jabs and round-house kicks, not to mention his Spiderman-like talent of sticking to any surface. There is also a mastery of flight to be experienced, but it's only available on just a couple of levels and even manages to ruin those moments with an awkward control system.

That aside, what makes Blazer a respectable chap is his sheer range of spells, which amounts to some awesome magical weapons. Unfortunately, you don't actually gather these abilities, but are awarded them individually by completing a level. While this is a means of enticing you in to the action it does also have the repercussion of making it impossible to have a complete inventory of powers until the final levels of the game.

The first boss in the game is visually excellent, but to kill him you just have to hit that lamp a few time. Watch out for his flames.

Selecting levels from the password screen lets you start with all the power ups from that stage.

Punches and kicks occur in combinations. Just tap the keys a few times.

Unexpected tale

The main appeal of Sky Blazer though, is its inclination to deliver something unexpected. A point which is carried through its changing style of gameplay, range of spells and even the bosses. Initially, you'll find levels which require little more than a left-to-right dash, but gradually you're introduced to more involving challenges These may be well-timed leaps around a revolving tower, riding air currents and clouds,

There are only a few flying stages in the game. These are quite tricky to play as you have to tap the keys quickly to stay in flight whilst avoiding getting trapped in the automatic scrolling screens.

VERDICT

Despite the fact that it's only possible to have all your best weapons at the end of this game, the journey there is one of the most interesting platform battles around for the SNES. There's never too much of a single type of game style in here, be it flying or combat. You'll find plenty in Sky Blazer to surprise you, there's even a remake of the C64 classic Nebulus, complete with revolving tower. There are some hidden levels and the path through the game is a bit one dimensional, ending up with a rather short-lived game, but enjoyable with it.

PAUL RAND

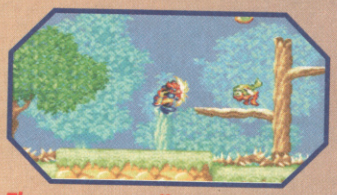
VERDICT

Sky Blazer works because it has that 'I want to see what's next' syndrome. There's an assortment of different playing styles which give the impression of excellent value for money. Unfortunately, it's all a bit easy and isn't as big as its map suggests. Some wild magical weapons impress, but never get used well because they are all geared to dealing with the bosses, and you can get by without them for most other baddies. What Sky Blazer offers is a refreshing game, full of new and old ideas which works where others haven't.

DENIZ AHMET

which require some drastic reflex adjustments, or negotiating a sandy waterfall where agility is crucial.

There's only one route through though, and those hidden levels are perhaps too hidden. But Sky Blazer's smart graphics should distract you from its shortcomings.



The screen scrolls upwards too, so explore high places for collectables.

Sky Blazer can summon his powers to dash across the screen killing all before him.

This tower spins around as you jump and within the doors are sub-levels.

I CAN DO MAGIC

Possibly the most attractive feature of this game is the varied and well animated special powers. Unfortunately, you can't have all the powers shown here until towards the end of the game, because you are only awarded a new weapon after completing certain stages in the game.

This weapon is available from the start and once released will destroy all baddies in its path.

This makes you invincible for a while so that you can run around destroying what you like.

This has the same effect as the blade except that it launches you across the screen.

This doesn't kill any baddies, but it will top up your energy giving you more time.

This spectacular move sends streaks of lightning down parts of the screen, killing anything in its path.

By turning into a phoenix you can fly to the end of a level if you're quick.

This move freezes baddies, making them easy meat.

This move causes Sky to spin around fast before launching multiple shots.

Enables you to stick to any surface you like – vital for your survival.

By pressing your L and R buttons you can decide which power to summon. This panel indicates what is currently selected.

MEGA-CD

PROS: Plenty of variety and action.

CONS: Lack of depth in gameplay.

GRAPHICS	Vivid and original, but some glitches in parallax and sprite collision.	84%
SOUND	Mystical music, but silly attack sounds. Not very appropriate.	75%
GAMEPLAY	Easy to get into, and rewarding with perseverance.	87%
VALUE	Lots of variety but it's a bit easy. Same each time you play.	71%

MISS OK! HIT!

86

REVIEW

AMIGA | by ALTERNATIVE | £25.99

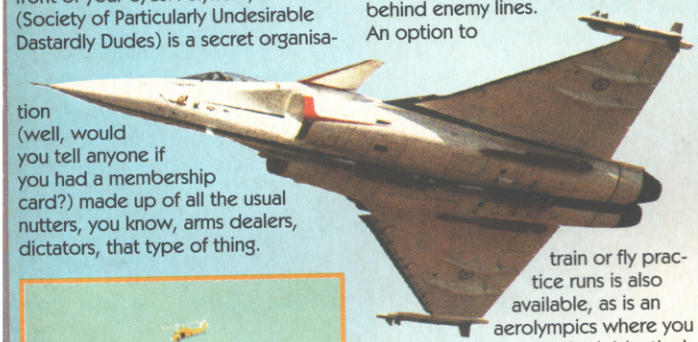
Out now. Contact Alternative (0977 797777) for information.

Crap graphics, naff sound, rubbish presentation, great gameplay. Nah, it'll never work

JETSTRIKE

There are over 40 different weapons systems to choose from, so this building probably doesn't stand much of a chance!

SPUDD! Original intro eh?! That's where the originality ends I'm afraid as there's one super cheesy plot about to unfold right in-front of your eyes. Anyhow, SPUDD (Society of Particularly Undesirable Dastardly Dudes) is a secret organisation (well, would you tell anyone if you had a membership card?) made up of all the usual nutters, you know, arms dealers, dictators, that type of thing.



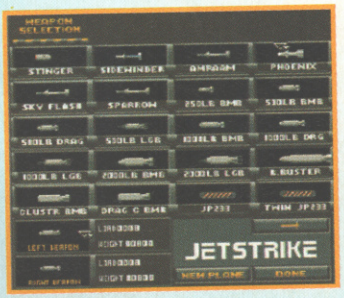
and it's up to you as a top pilot to win the fight against evil. There are 100 missions to be played through, each with its own objective, such as destroying things or dropping spies behind enemy lines. An option to train or fly practice runs is also available, as is an aerolympics where you complete the 'objective' by gathering balloons and the like.

The most novel aspect of the game is the control method. Your ship's direction is altered by moving up and down, while speed is changed by moving left and right. It's crap at first, and highly frustrating. Bear with it though, 'cos you'll soon find it to your liking. ●

Bored with the standard jets that usually turn up in these games? Not to worry, there's also a selection of helicopters for your amusement.

King Edward

No-one has been able to stop these critters, but now the tide is turning



Weapon selection. Now do you just want to mildly chaff your enemy, or blow them to Kingdom Come? The choice is yours.

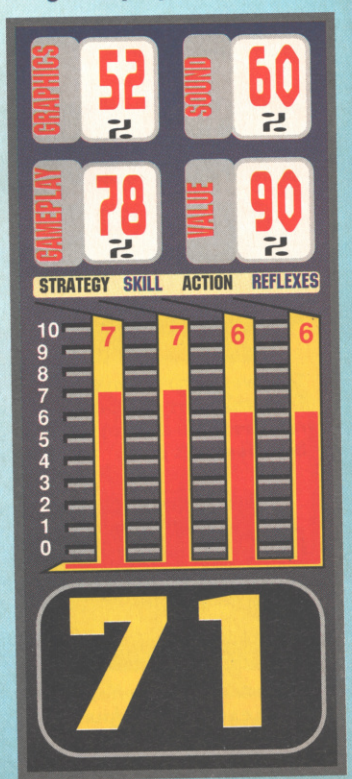
With 100 missions to choose from air traffic control are having trouble keeping up with them all.

"Is it a bird or a plane?" Well I think you'll find that it's quite categorically a plane.

You also get chance to fly the classic Gee Bee Z Air Racer for plenty of loop-the-loop antics.

JANUARY SALE

Following on from Daze's excellent £16.99 price for Stardust, Alternative has clearly been blessed with a fit of generosity also. It hopes to get a series of extra mission disks and upgrades put on the front of Amiga magazines so thatupgrading won't cost you a penny (apart from the mag of course). And with a major prize based on reaching the Apocalypse sequence in the game, could we be seeing the beginning of caring, independent Nineties-spirited software houses. Group hugs all round, eh?



VERDICT

Jetstrike is a fine example of how great graphics and sound do not a decent game make, because at the end of the day it's the gameplay. The control method takes a while to get used to and the fact that you start with only one life doesn't help, but it's definitely worth sticking with. Once you get into the game you'll be overcome with a warm glow of satisfaction in knowing that you bought this for the gameplay, and not a five minute graphical feast. With extra mission and update disks this should keep you busy for ages.

RIK SKEWS

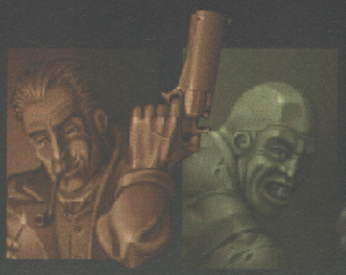
Out now. Contact Renegade (071-481 9214) for information.

THE CHAOS ENGINE

Past imperfect and future. We're talking about 'tense', because that's what this platform blaster from the Bitmap Brothers is!

Each character has their own special weapon when it comes to killing.

Keys access hidden areas and make bridges appear.



GENTLEMAN THUG

NAVVIE BRIGAND

PREACHER MERCENARY

What exactly is a Chaos Engine? Well, be patient while I digress... Some time in the last century a group of mad scientist people were experimenting with time, space and early computers. The result, although primitive to start with, was a machine that evolved rapidly, becoming immensely powerful and became known as... The Chaos Engine...

Try and find the restart points.

What's all that then?

Eventually The Engine turned against its creator and sent a cloud of chaos across the land which turned animals and humans into beasts. Anyway, the climax is a little boring and involves six unsavoury characters (each with different skills and weapons) who have to work their way through the game and create order from chaos.

These are the 'nodes'. Shoot at them and they'll activate.

Blimey, that's good...

...and indeed it was good, and now it is again in this A1200 version. The game itself is in the top-down style romp famed by Gauntlet. The levels themselves are varied and encompass swamps, forests and industrial areas, mixing futuristic and olde-world style graphics to an almost brilliant effect.

Ooh, you tart!

The graphics have been tarted up in this version, but the game's best feature has been retained from the first game. This is the intelligent computer player who accompanies you around if you've got no friends. Unlike most games the computer character plays really well, although not as good as another human of course.

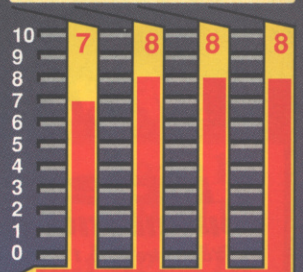
VERDICT

This game reeks of the Bitmap Brothers, with its graphics mix of futuristic and natural backgrounds, plus the music provides a perfect background soundtrack when playing as it changes to suit each situation. Although the game offers little new to the Gauntlet-style it emulates it perfectly and is great fun to play, thanks to its accurate difficulty curve and strategy-based shooting action. Add a great one and two-player mode and the A1200 Chaos Engine is just as essential as its daddy.

RIK SKEWS

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	VALUE
86	84	86	84

STRATEGY	SKILL	ACTION	REFLEXES
7	8	8	8



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Get ready to discover the most essential shoot-'em-up on the Amiga bar none

PROJECT X SPECIAL EDITION

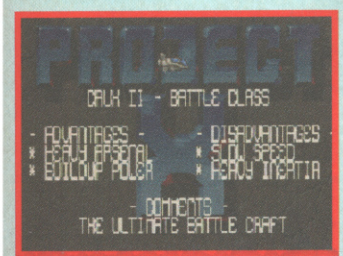
Here's one of the guardians. OK he doesn't look tough but he moves like the clappers. Well tricky!

Shoot-'em-ups generally have duff plots. If it's not a mad dictator on the loose then some sort of mutant biological experiment has broken loose and hey, strange coincidence or what, but that's just what's happened in Project X.

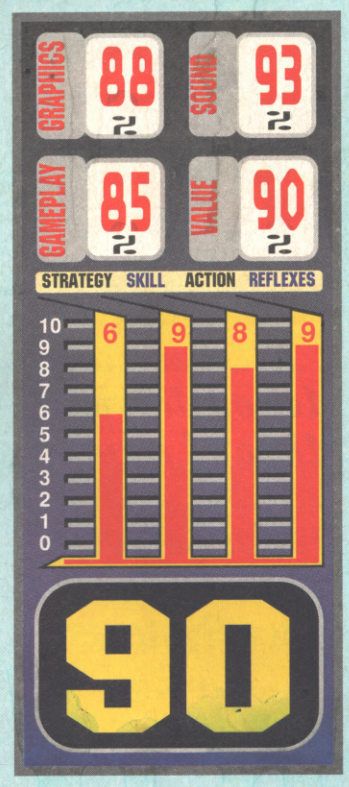
Main course

Right, with that out of the way I can spend the rest of the space telling you how groovy Project-X is. OK, so it offers nothing new but what's on offer has been superbly implemented. Solid graphics, with some neat touches (especially in the weapon launches and explosions), add heaps of enjoyment of playing the game.

However, this is nothing compared to the sound department. Everyone pokes fun at me here for being a fan of Allister Brimble's music, but even they admit that Project X has one of the best pieces of game music ever. There's some crunching sound effects and realistic speech too. Indeed presentation is top rate and thankfully the gameplay is too. The original was way too tough, and this isn't easy, but the difficulty curve has been pitched just right. There's surprisingly few blasters on the humble Amiga and with Project X around anything new will have to be mighty special to topple it. ●



The CRUX craft is slow and heavy, but with its large arsenal is best suited to beginners.



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QWAK

A Bubble Bobble-type platform romp from Team 17 that's not at all cack – or should that be 'qwak'?

You (and a friend if you want, split-screen fans) are about to travel through eight magical worlds, which in turn are divided into 80 levels. Pick up the bonuses, grab the keys and potions, blat the baddies and make your way to the exit. The exit opens once all the keys on a level are collected.

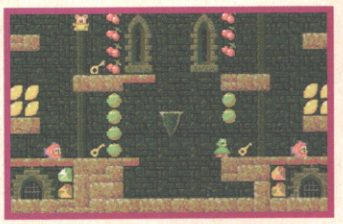
Moo

Apart from your regular baddies there's also some nasties that fall from the sky should you activate a trap, and end-of-level guardians to contend with. Baddies are wasted by firing some of your limited supply of eggs at them. Additional help comes in the form of a challenge scene which crops up every so often. Here the objective is to complete the level and collect as many collectables as possible before the time limit runs out.

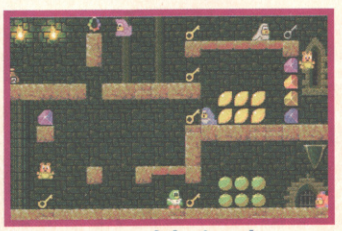
Woof

Qwak is unusual in that it's just as much fun to play by yourself as it is with a friend. There's more than enough variety and new features on each level to sustain interest initially and over time. Neither the graphics or sound are particularly good, but they're cute enough and sustain the cheery atmosphere throughout the experience. A great little puzzler and a bargain at the price. ●

Eggs are limited so use wisely.



Platforms dissolve gradually



Here you need the iron key.

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ALIEN BREED SPECIAL EDITION

'If it ain't broke then don't fix it'. So what does Team 17 go and do?

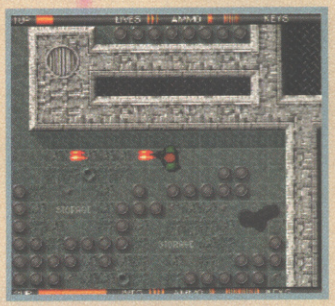
The loading is over, the intro screen flashes, and a deep, gravelly voice informs you that "...It's 2191, and the galaxy stands on the brink of war. The move from Earth happened so fast as people tried to escape the pollution.

"With widespread space travel came new crimes and the Interplanetary Corps were born. Johnson and Stone were two of the best, and were returning home after a six month stint in the outer spiral arm.

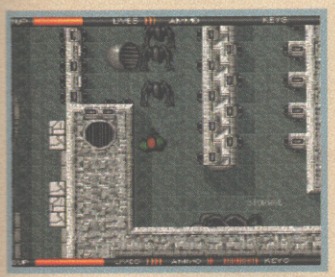
"Orders came through to check out a distant space station in the Intex network which had stopped transmitting. Little did they know they were about to walk into the mists of an alien breed..." End stereotypical gravelly voice.

Mother-in-law

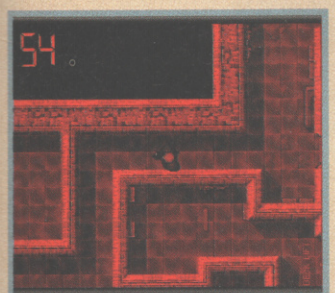
OK it's a shoot-'em-up, but unfortunately this has dated badly. The graphics are average at best, although as usual with Team 17 the sound and music are solid. This was the game that made Team 17 and to be honest it's difficult to see how. The gameplay is bland, far too difficult and very, very repetitive. Stick to the sequel, it's a far more polished game, and more importantly a much more fun to play game.



Some meaty graphical effects enhance the power-ups no end.



The aliens come thick and fast and are a right pest to get rid of even with decent power-ups.



If you don't make the lift before the timer runs out, it's game over, not just the loss of a life.

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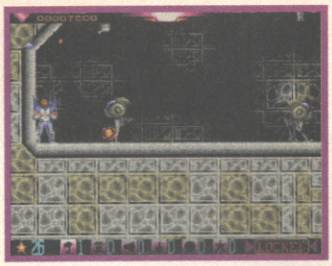


This special weapon means instant death to any enemy.

Repackaged, revamped, but just as good, it's the latest budget release from the Wakefield wonders

ASSASSIN SPECIAL EDITION

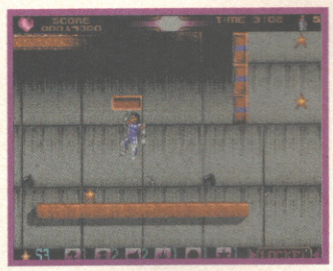
You're the assassin hired by allied security forces to try and end the reign of the villain Midan, who's lurking in his underground lair. Or put simply this is a Strider-inspired platformer set over 16 levels.

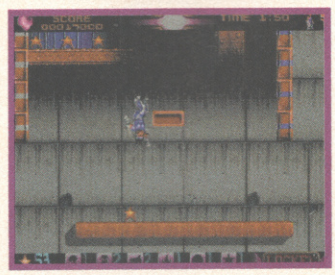
Mr Motivator

Sassy (the game's hero-type chap) is armed with a pulse-laser that's powered up by killing the bad guys. And smart bombs can be found by destroying containers or guardians. Around each level are gold stars. Collect 50 and a star-burst mega weapon is your reward, while collecting 99 will reward Sassy with an extra life. As is usual with platform games, Assassin is played against a strict time limit but instead of dying when the time's out, Sassy will lose bonuses and encounter harder baddies.

Like Project X Special Edition, the difficulty level has been tweaked for more balanced and easier to get into gameplay. Graphics, sound and music are very polished and the animation on Assassin is quite something.

Gameplay is solid but with only four backgrounds it can get boring. And sometimes control over Sassy is suspect, but overall Assassin Special Edition is everything US Gold's Strider licence should have been.





The Assassin's animation when flipping is spectacular (200 frames of anim were used.)

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REVIEW

PC | by TRANSCEND | £37.50

Out now. Contact Transend (021-625 3366) for information.

Blood-ridden victims litter the floor. Watch out that you don't become part of the garbage too.

Decisions, decisions... now shall I slaughter this guy with my Chain Gun or my Plasma Gun.

A dark action game filled with tension, gore and the sort of 3D graphics other games only dream of...

Doom, if you want an easy comparison, is a bit like Alien Breed in 3D, but twice as atmospheric and 10 times as violent

Gameplay is simple enough. With a 3D view point, you have to find the hidden exit on each level, dodging fireballs, pools of toxic waste, acid and lava. Along the way, you pick up extra weapons, health packs and useful gadgets. You also have a map which shows you the places you've visited.

Do you really want to hurt me?

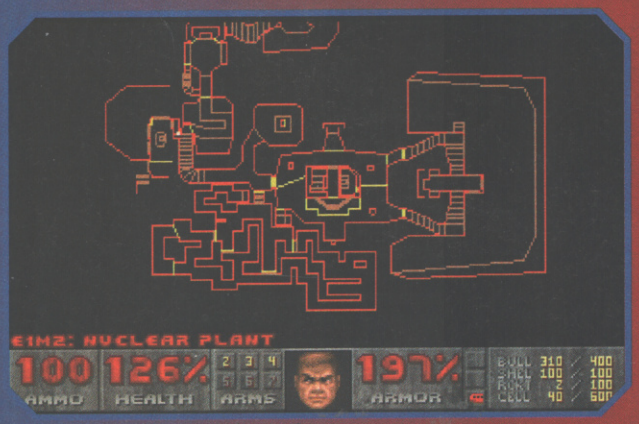
The game is split into three main parts, each with about 15 levels, and there are four levels of difficulty - from 'Please Don't Hurt Me' through to 'Ultra Violence'...

Total carnage

That's the big giveaway. On the carnage front alone, Doom is ridiculously gruesome. From blowing chunks out of a soldier's chest with a pump-action shotgun at close range, to chainsawing your initials in

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I PRESS THIS?

There's a huge number of hidden traps and secret panels in Doom. They are not just of the 'step on pressure plate to open door a mile away' kind of rubbish either, many are complex sequences of switches and buttons which will activate an entire room of machinery. By using the map and the windows you can see plenty of places that you want to get to, but working out how to do so is half the fun. Here the button in the room opens a panel in the outside wall allowing you out into the courtyard to get the chain gun.



VERDICT

There have been several recent 3D action games on PC – Terminator Rampage, and the 3D parts of Jurassic Park spring to mind – but none of them are in the same league as Doom. It looks better, sounds better, plays better and is altogether meaner, nastier and harder than all of them put together. Technically and visually it's awesome, you get hours and hours of gameplay for your money – not only that but you can also try it out as shareware for incredulous £3.75 first - and the action is incredibly intense.

PAUL RAND

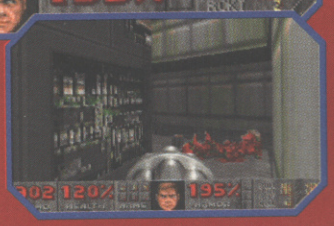
Plenty of ammo available, now all you need is someone, or something, to inflict it upon.

a minotaur, there's enough blood 'n' guts in Doom to last several lifetimes. Ten minutes into the game, and there are intestines and assorted organs decorating the walls, the ceiling, the floor – everywhere!

But the best thing is that it's not flat, horizontal action either; one minute, you might be running for cover along the side of a ditch, the next minute you'll be racing up winding stairs. As you scroll smoothly round Doom, the level of texture-mapped detail and the sense of scale is just awe inspiring.

Behind you

More importantly, Doom has bucket loads of the stuff most games lack – atmosphere. Like a good horror movie, you don't know what's going to burst out of the screen next. You can hear footsteps round the corner, or something breathing behind you. Screams and gunshots echo in the distance as you're plunged suddenly into darkness, or you're edging nervously into a barely lit room — the suspense is tremendous. Doom is, quite simply, a genuinely frightening game.



I can hear something round the corner. The question is how many of them are there?

THE JOYS OF A WELL-STOCKED ARSENAL

FISTS With, of course, knuckle dusters.
CHAINSAW For reasons of good taste, these are well hidden and devastating at short range.
PISTOL Wimpy, next-to-useless, but it's all you get to start with.
SHOTGUN Your standard weapon. Can take out more than one baddie at a time.
CHAIN GUN The sort of thing normally found on helicopter gunships.
ROCKET LAUNCHER Massive destructive potential, just don't try using it at close range.
PLASMA GUN Pretty and effective, but lacks style.
BFG2000 Big guns don't come any bigger than this. Needs plenty of ammo though.

Are you ready to meet your Doom? Nice guy that Doom, but his mate's a bit miserable – Gloom.

THE FACE

You don't need to take much notice of the health rating, you can tell by the look on your character's face how things are probably going.

1 Everything's peachy

2 Ha! It's only a flesh-wound.

3 Battered, bruised and starting to get angry.

4 Somehow I don't think that this guy's happy.

VERDICT

True, Doom is a right rivetting game to play. But it goes way over the top on the gratuitous violence and mayhem, doesn't it? It may only be cartoon violence, but it's certainly not a game for the very young or the faint hearted. If you don't have a problem with the GBH then there are a few other niggles. The gameplay does get repetitive after a while, and to start with you need a powerful PC to get it running well, you have to tinker with the set-up a lot, and the joystick calibration stinks. It's still a good game though.

GARY LORD

PC

PROS: Frenetic action with excellent gameplay and 3D scrolling.

CONS: OTT violence and you need a pretty powerful PC.

GRAPHICS	Sweet, smooth 3D scrolling the like of which you've never seen before.	97%
SOUND	Brilliant. Really makes the game, plus there's some top samples.	92%
GAMEPLAY	Can be repetitive, but there's certainly tons of it.	85%
VALUE	Shareware version costs £3.75! The full-price version is excellent value too.	89%

MISS OK HIT!

93

REVIEW

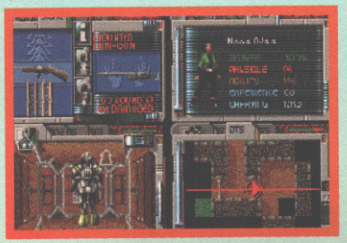
PC | by PSYGNOSIS | £45.99

Out now. Contact Psygnosis (051-709 5755) for information.

HIRED GUNS

The moody team selection screen allows you to pick your mercs from assassins, infantry, medics etc.

Think you're tough huh? Well grab a couple of friends and settle down with Hired Guns, the multiplayer, futuristic RPG



It may seem daunting but controlling four characters at once is actually quite easy.

OK. You may be an RPG veteran, but you haven't seen anything like Hired Guns. From DMA Design (the people behind Lemmings), Guns is an action RPG set in the future, so there are no goblins, orcs or trolls here, plus it's extremely easy to get into.

An RPG? Arrgh!

The game's set in a bleak, barren wasteland (probably with rain) where you choose four mercenaries to lead over hill and dale to destroy a production plant that is belching out millions of bioengineered organisms, and if these mutants aren't killed all intelligent life will be destroyed.

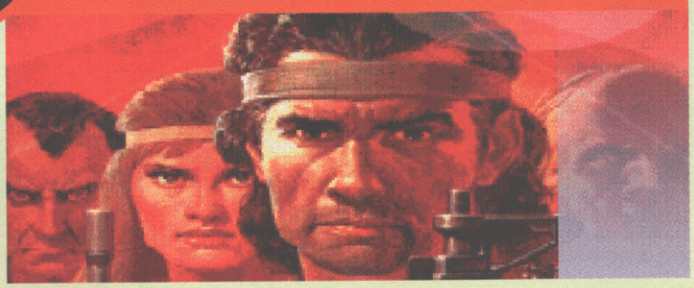
Saving the world

Like any RPG your characters can move in the standard directions and manipulate objects and pick up items. Each character has access to three information screens; the inventory which shows available weapons and equipment (first aid kits, security passes, food); the Digital Terrain Scanner (DTS), which automaps each level as you discover new areas and your team's stats screen.

Hired Guns not only features a full-blown campaign mode which leads you a merry dance towards the belching production plant, but it also includes numerous training missions and several action levels where you can ignore the adventuring and just walk round and shoot things. ●

MULTIPLAYER ACTION

Hired Guns can be played by one, two, three or even four players. If you have a friend you can control two mercs each, or if you're really popular get three friends round and have a real game. Of course, if you're on your own you've got to control all four team members, but don't worry because this isn't as difficult or as dull as it sounds. If you nominate a captain you can instruct the other mercs to follow orders. Ideally you can plan complex strategies, splitting your team up to search different locations.



Opt for the campaign and you've signed up for a long journey across a varied terrain.

VERDICT

I still don't quite know what to make of Hired Guns. Sure it's different to the numerous fantasy RPGs cluttering up the shelves and it's a good game, but compared to the likes of Shadow Caster and Ultima Underworld, flick-screen scrolling isn't state-of-the-art anymore. It may be fine and dandy on the Amiga, but because there are so many good RPGs on the PC, I would have liked to have seen smooth scrolling in this version. But moans aside, Hired Guns is a nice addition to the RPG genre. I like it anyway.

RIK SKEWS

BATMAN RETURNS

Batman returns to find something's not right in Gotham

Once again Batty is out to protect Gotham City. This time it's from the Penguin and his killer clowns, who must be stopped beat-'em-up style. And it's a pretty rubbish beat-'em-up at that. Batman must fight heaps of baddies in a variety of locations, all of which are poorly drawn and dreadfully animated. There's the odd platform to leap on, but there's little point to this since the bad guys just follow you and continue to fight.

Da, da, da, da

Batman moves like a one-legged tortoise under a snow drift. He's aided by his Batarang, a Batdisk to dismount motorcyclists with and a Batrope which pulls baddies nearer – Mortal Kombat style. The actual combat though is atrocious since there's only one punch and three kicks on offer, all of which are rubbish. Add to this a rather lame defensive move and you've got a beat-'em-up that's going to need more than a special move to ward off Ken, E Honda and Co. Can it get any worse? 'Fraid so. Crap collision detection, crap graphics, long loading times... the list goes on. Apparently Konami is leaving the Amiga scene. Ooh, real shame that.

Batman meets baddie, baddie beats Batman, end of story.

Pick up the Batarang otherwise you can't beat this guy.

Despite cack graphics the level reloads each time you die.

Out now. Contact Konami (0753 5534445) for information.

AMIGA ▶ by GAMETEK/KONAMI ▶ £14.99

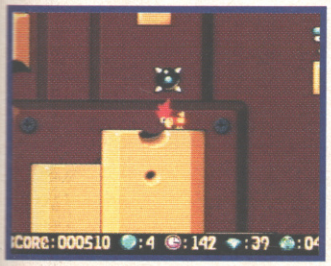
ALFRED CHICKEN

How much more can we take? Alfred Chicken returns to CVG yet again. He might as well have his own section...

Alfred has burst on to the games scene like some kind of nasty, pimply rash, covering almost every popular format around.

Combine that with spasmodic bouts of publicity, such as one of Mindscape's PR men standing for parliament dressed as Alfred, and you really start to get sick of the sight of it.

There's nothing revolutionary about Alfred. It looks like Robocod, plays like many other platformers and doesn't seem inspiring at first. What it does have, though, is loads of levels, dozens of collectables and a surreal sense of humour. For instance watering cans give Alfred extra lives and tin cans give him a worm which spins around him obliterating his enemies



Certain nasties can't be destroyed and must be avoided instead.

The evil Meka-Chickens are your deadly enemies and have to be killed on sight.

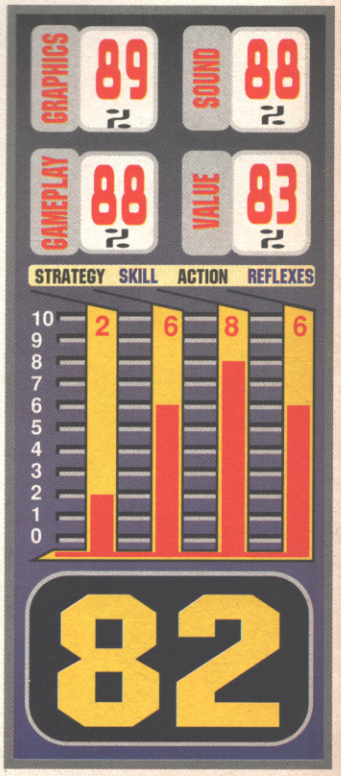
Springs have to be employed to catapult Alfred to higher platforms.

You're buxted

Alfred is brighter than your average oven-ready hero, for starters he's almost mastered the art of flying. In his case it involves a lot of leaping and chaotic flapping, the net result being a hovering chicken, rather than a flying one, but it's a good attempt all the same. Once airborne Alfred can dive bomb enemies, causing them to explode violently all over the place.

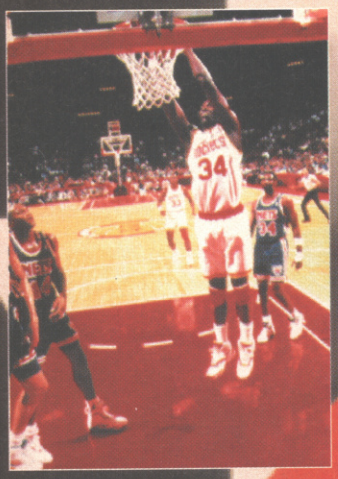
As sick to death as we are of this game, it's good and CD32 owners should buy it. It's just as addictive and playable as all the other versions and is easily one of the best looking.

Out now. Contact Mindscape (0444 246333) for information.

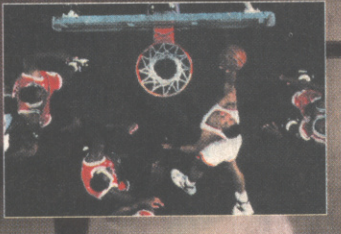


CD32 ▶ by MINDSCAPE ▶ £25.99

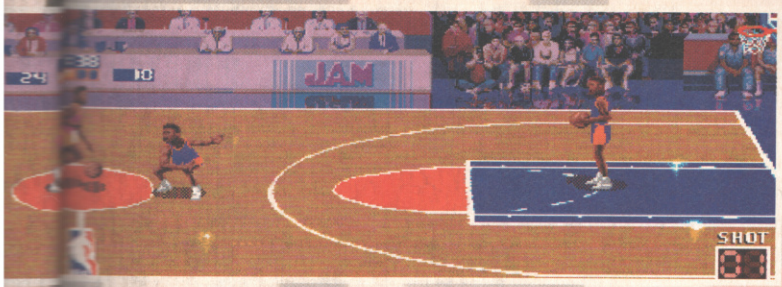
CONTACT Acclaim (071-344 5000) for information.



NBA JAM



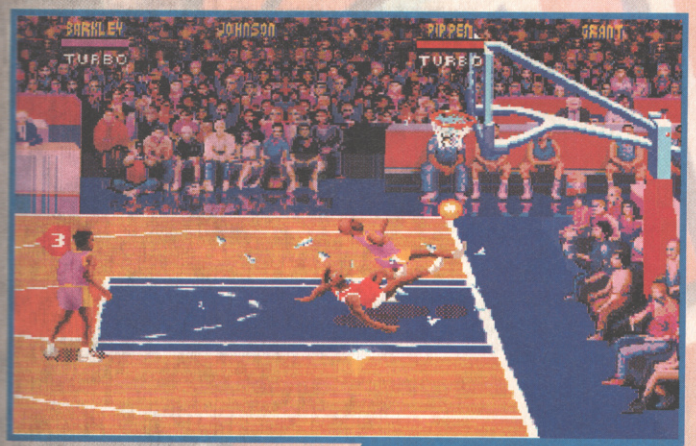
It's basketball, but not as we know it. There's no namby-pamby non-contact rules here, it's every man for himself in a rim-rocking, plate-smashing, lanky-dude dribble-fest of basketball action



BURNING BALLS

When a player sinks three baskets in a row without the opposition scoring the ball, he's deemed to be 'on fire'. Basically this means that he has unlimited turbo power, and a better chance of scoring from virtually anywhere on the court, plus every time he touches the ball it bursts into flame. This only lasts until the opposition score, but in the mean time you can rack up a decent lead.

The problem with basketball courts is that they're just too small. Here's a complete piccy (created at much time and expense) of the entire NBA Jam pitch. The sad little defender closest to the centre of the pitch appears to be dancing, when in fact this is his attempt at tackling the on-coming player. You can shoot from anywhere on the court, but obviously the closer you are to the hoop the better chance you have of scoring. It's always worth taking a long-shot when the clock is about to run out.



MEGA DRIVE

Don't get the wrong idea, this isn't a game about basketball stars' breakfast habits. Jam, in the basketball sense, is just like a slam-dunk, which in turn is simply putting the ball through the hoop. But any fool can do that, the real skill is making it look as flash as possible. Which is why, once the top players have got the boring business of winning the league out of the way, they get together for exhibition Jams to show just how good they really are.

Top players

Taking part in this tournament are the two top players from each team in the league, except those already under contract for other games. These two-on-two encounters make for more action than five a-side games, and they are much faster, making the perfect recipe for a decent console basketball sim. ☛

SNES

There's hardly any difference in the graphics between the Mega Drive and SNES versions. Here we see the players being showered with razor sharp glass and not, as you might expect, being reduced to a bloody pulp. The SNES version looks slightly sharper than the Mega Drive game, but it doesn't make any difference to the overall gameplay, which, after all, is the main thing.

VERDICT

There's a plethora of basketball games on the Mega Drive , which is surprising considering the sport isn't very big over here. That's not to say they're a bad thing, games like Dave Robinson's Basketball are very playable. However, NBA JAM doesn't aim to be realistic, just fun, so it doesn't matter if you know the first thing about the sport. The controls are simple, the action's a little too end-to-end at times, but despite that, this is a perfectly excellent conversion of the coin-op.

RIK SKEWS

MEGA DRIVE: If you get in close to the hoop, chances are your player will perform a back-snapping reverse dunk. These are almost impossible for a defender to stop, but not particularly interesting to watch, so you'll probably end up using flashier and more risky moves.

MEGA DRIVE: If you've got particularly crap mates playing against you, there are several very poor teams included in the roster that you can choose to balance things out. On the other hand, you could always go for a scoring record and choose one of the top sides such as the Chicago Bulls (minus the now-retired Michael Jordan) or Charles Barkley's Phoenix Suns.

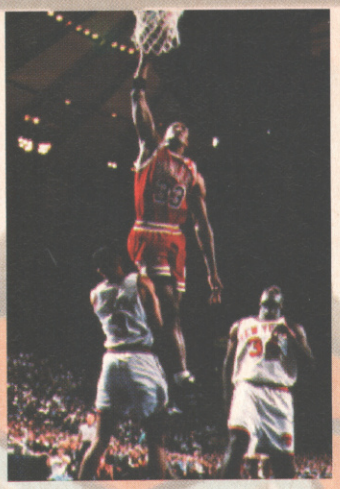
Each player has his own strengths and weaknesses. Some are better at long shots, while some are only good for pushing their opponents off the ball. Obviously some teams are better than others, such as the Phoenix Suns who'll stomp on the Denver Nuggets, who deserve to be punished with a name like that.

The rules have been altered for the exhibition game. Whereas you're not really allowed to shove your opponents in real baskets, at least not while the ref is looking, any amount of off-the-ball fouling is allowed. In fact, the best way to get the ball from the opposition is to knock them over then grab it and run away before they get chance to hit back.

Turbo nutter basket

Whatever the name of the game and new rules, the object is the same - get the ball through the net at any cost, even if it means dispossessing your team mate because you think he's crap. Often the best tactic is to go it alone and dribble the length of the court before pulling off a dazzling dunk. The problem is, like in real basketball, you've got 30 seconds to a take a shot or pass the ball, and if the clock runs out possession goes to the other team.

What separates these players from normal basketballteers is their built-in turbo charger. Whether this is down to



THE EASY LIFE

Realising that not everyone is a game god, Acclaim has incorporated a useful 'fair-play' feature. If you fall too far behind as a result of your own crapness this mode kicks in, making your computer opponents slightly thicker and increasing the odds of the ball going through the net when you shoot. Of course, if you're really hard you'll go to the options screen and disable the feature, won't you?

***SNES:** Pippen is 'on-fire' so his jams are almost unstoppable.*

***SNES:** A bit of digitised footage introduces the half-time scores and statistics.*

MEGA DRIVE

NOW WE'RE JAMMING

You want shots? Well NBA has the most outrageous arsenal of improbable, and down-right dangerous, shots to be found in any basketball game. Just take a look at these:

Anti-grav float: Defy gravity as your player leaps 15 feet into the air and glides slowly to the net, pushing the ball through the net to cap off this highly improbable move.

Super helicopter spin: Another highly improbable move where the player jumps so high he has to duck his head to stop cracking it on the roof, while spinning faster than Jimmy Hill's chin. This is the most unstoppable shot in the entire game, as your player's so high nobody can get close enough to dispossess him. The height he actually jumps to depends entirely on what his dunk skill rating is. If it's low he'll barely reach net-height, making him easy prey for alert defenders

Rim Rocker: This is the most dubious move of the game because the player shoves the ball between his legs, jumps backwards towards the hoop and dumps it through for two points. It's a relatively easy shot to stop, but considering where the ball's been, who could blame a defender for not trying? This shot is normally only executed when you're close to the net, so if you're behind on points it's not worth risking. Instead run backwards, or pass, to avoid the defenders and take a shot from further out.

SNES: *All versions of the game feature the same rim-rocking moves. No matter how complicated they look, they're all executed in the same way. Get your player running with the ball while holding down the turbo button, and as soon as you get near the hoop hit 'Shoot'. Providing you've still got some turbo power left your player will launch into a death-defying dunk. Exactly what type of dunk that is depends entirely on how far away from the hoop he was when you hit 'Shoot'. For best results leap when you enter the red semi-circle.*

SNES: *Normally the best way to gain possession of the ball is to try and smack the person who is in possession of the ball. Fortunately there are few rules in this game and the occasional knee in the groin goes unnoticed by the referee, except by the fact that the player is writhing in agony on the floor. All the players have a defence rating which determines how effective he is when it comes to shoving opponents, so you get some really bizarre situations where a short player spends the whole match terrorising someone who towers above him.*

SNES: *Tip-off for possession.*

the latest development from Nike or something funny someone slipped into their drinks, the result is the most improbable display of basketball skill ever. Hold down the appropriate button and your player will power

BREAKING GLASS

When you've been particularly greedy and raked up masses of points all by yourself, chances are that a powerful jam will shatter the glass backplate behind the net, showering the players below with razor-sharp shards. This serves no purpose and the players don't get so much as a scratch, but it's a nice touch all the same. At least it shows you're doing well, allowing you to make insulting gestures at your mate.

VERDICT

The SNES doesn't have many basketball games, which makes this NBA Jam all the more attractive, but it's streets ahead of any other basketball game, it's just not worth mentioning the competition. As a four-player game it's outstanding, there's nothing quite like seeing beaten enemies when the final buzzer goes. It's an excellent conversion of the arcade original, but more importantly it's just a good fun title which is packed with action, loaded with speed and immense fun to play.

DENIZ AHMET

SNES: *Players dribble the ball automatically when they run, but if you stop with the ball, attempt to take a shot and don't actually release it, your player isn't allowed to move. On the Mega Drive and SNES version the commentator calls out 'Tent Peg', while Game Gear owners get a bit of text at the top of the screen. All you can do in this situation is pass, shoot or be tackled.*

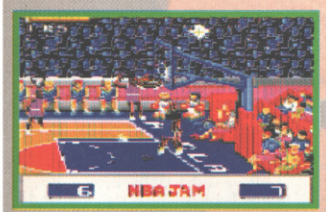
SNES: *Passing isn't that necessary in NBA Jam, as the best tactic is just to put your head down and run. But if you do want to stick to convention and pass the ball about a bit, you'd better be up against a weaker side, since passes are very easy to intercept, especially against turbo charged players.*

GAME GEAR ▸ by ACCLAIM ▸ MARCH RELEASE ▸ £34.99

GAME GEAR: ***If you perform a particularly improbable dunk the audience reward it by taking loads of photos, probably blinding your player in the process. Three point shots are much trickier, because you have to take them outside the goal area. Because you can't dunk them, precision timing is called for when you shoot.***

along with extra speed, strength and shooting ability. This really takes it out of the players though, and they can only stay turbo-charged for a limited time before they revert back to normal mode. A gauge at the top of the screen shows how much power you've got left, but as soon as you take your finger off the turbo button it soon recharges. Turbo also comes in handy when you're defender as it lets your player jump higher and stand a better chance of smacking his opponent off the ball.

Using the turbo is a little tougher on the Game Gear version because it's activated by the Start button, which leads to finger-breaking combinations when you try to slam-dunk the ball with turbo held down.



GAME GEAR: ***Because of the small screen it's a little harder to time your tackles on the Game Gear version, which inevitably leads to higher scoring games.***

GAME GEAR: ***Apart from the obvious graphic differences, the Game Gear version of NBA is identical to the 16-bit versions. At half-time you even get the same bit of digitised slam-dunk footage before you're bombarded with game statistics.***

JAMMIN' ON 16-BIT

Fancy some real opposition in the courts? Well if you've got the Mega Drive or SNES version and a four-player adaptor you and three mates can thrash it out on the courts. That way when it all goes wrong and you have the pants thrashed off you, there's always someone else to blame.

On the other hand, if you're a sad, lonely, no-friends-at-all type, there are two ways to play the game. The first is in tag mode where you control the player with the ball. This can be a bit confusing, especially if you're big on passing the ball as you're basically trying to pass to yourself. The alternative is to play in arcade mode, where you control one player with the computer doing the additional leg work. Here you can make the computer player pass to you, or if you're feeling particularly generous even tell him to take a shot.

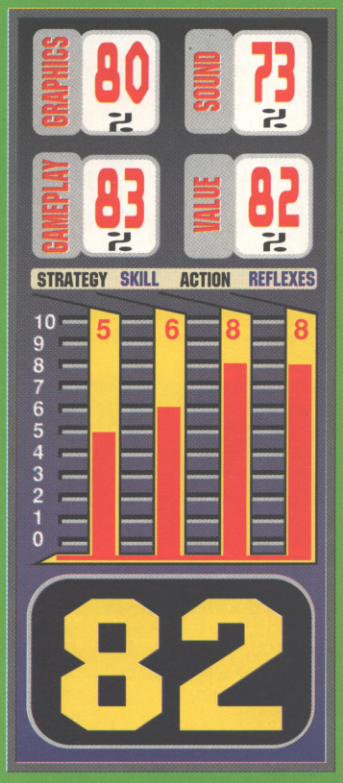
VERDICT

While obviously not being able to match up to the 16-bit versions in graphics and sound, the Game Gear still comes out rosy when it comes to playability. All the moves are there, the same gameplay features, although there isn't a link mode which is a bit of a downer, since half the fun of the other versions is playing a pal. The court is a bit too brightly coloured when you compare it to some of the rather drab gear that the players wear, but otherwise this game is brill'.

GARY LORD

GAME GEAR: ***The graphics on the Game Gear version are large and well defined, including the ball. The players on some teams are a little hard to tell apart, even with a ruddy great arrow pointing to the head of the one you're controlling.***

GAME GEAR: ***Programming team Iguana have done a fine job of including all the 16-bit games' slam dunks in the Game Gear version. They're executed in exactly the same way, but the turbo button this time is Start, which is awkward since it's not that easy to hold down while pressing buttons I or II. It gets easier when you've had a few games, but it's always going to be a little awkward.***

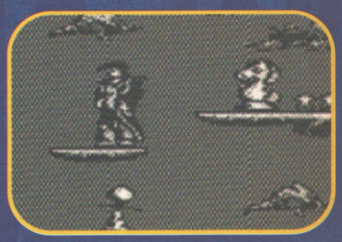


REVIEW

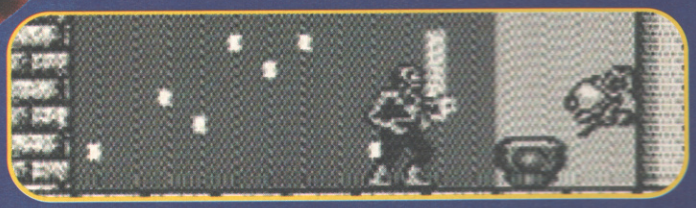
GAME BOY | by ACCLAIM | £24.99

Out now. Contact Acclaim (071 344 5000) for more information.

SPIDER-MAN X-MEN
ARCADE'S REVENGE



See if you can Gamble your way out of this little teaser.



A tricky manoeuvre is needed to get rid of this spherical pain in the butt.

Spidey teams up with the X-rated mutants to puzzle their way through the action

Your Spider Sense will tingle when trouble's ahoy, not that you can do a lot about it.

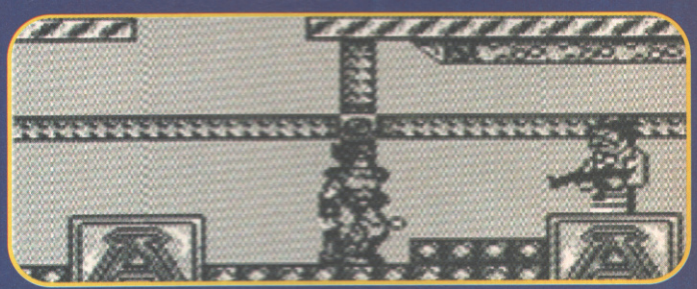
Spiderman always seemed cooler than most superheroes, and if James 'The Terminator' Cameron gets his own way and makes his new film about the Web Slinger there will no doubt be a stream of different format releases of the film licence.

Spiderman suspects foul play. And he's not stupid our Spidey, because that's precisely what's happened, and arch supervill' Arcade is the git responsible.

Spider Sense

Spidey starts looking for his sparring chums in Arcade's trap-laden complex (big building with lots of passage-ways, though why he didn't just hide them in a big bathtub I don't know.) You, naturally enough, take on the role of the Web Slinger to begin with and have to plot your way out of the complex, touching various security eyes in a certain order. Once you get through this section you can opt to be one of the X-Men, and for a bit of variety they all have different powers and tasks.

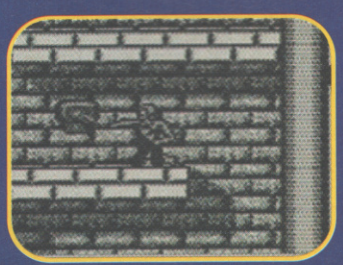
Storm has to escape an underwater peril with the aid of her lightning bolts; Cyclops a rickety rollercoaster ride using his eye beam and Wolverine has to dispose of some circus hoodlums with his razor-like claws. There is a total of four lives to get you through the game, and there's the usual quota of pick-ups along the way.



Wolverine's newly manicured claws will sort this guy out.

More of the same

And hopefully they will be something more dynamic than what we have here; and what do we have here? Well basically it's a platform game. Those weird and wonderful mutants, The X-Men, have disappeared and



Peter Parker, AKA Pete, has to get to these security cameras in the right order to get free.

VERDICT

Spiderman and X-Men's appeal has to be that you get to be all your favourite Marvel characters (unless you're a DC Comics fan that is). The problem is that although the characters change, the levels stay more or less the same. Plus some of the jumping requires such pixel-perfect precision, which is very irritating on a machine like the Game Boy, and the control methods can become so fiddly. The sprites are accurate representations of the Marvel characters though, which is no doubt the game's saving grace.

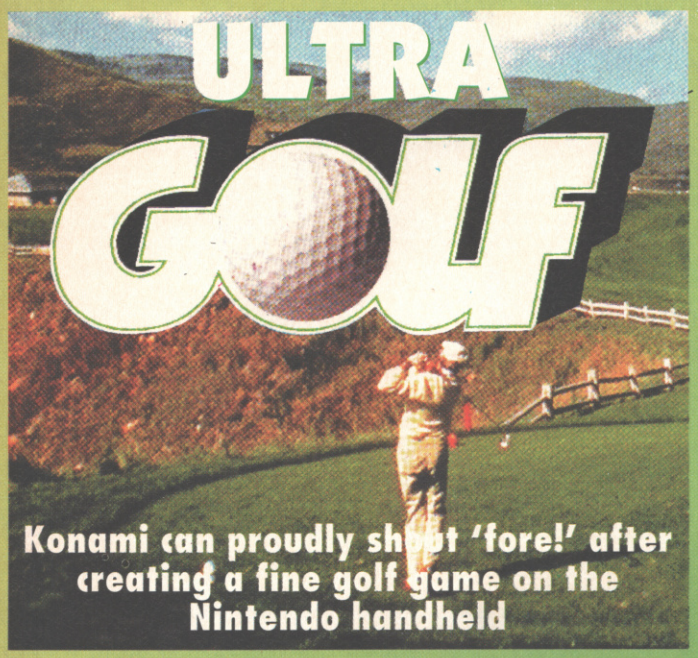
GARY LORD

REVIEW

GAME BOY | by KONAMI | £24.99

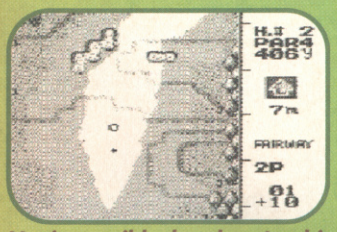
Out March. Contact Konami (0895 853000) for information.

ULTRA GOLF

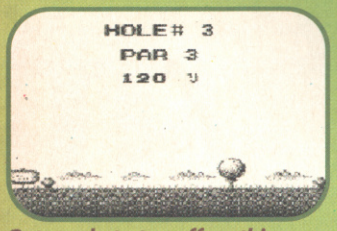


Konami can proudly shout 'fore!' after creating a fine golf game on the Nintendo handheld

This game is on a handheld, a format not exactly PC-like in its storage capacity, so you'd expect it to be very hard to fill this space. Wrong mate, 'cos believe it or not Konami Golf is chock-a-block full of page-filling options.



Not impossible, but there's a bit of a dogleg to the right.



Get ready to tee off on this tricky par three.

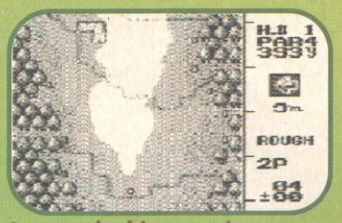
You've placed the ball well.

Skins

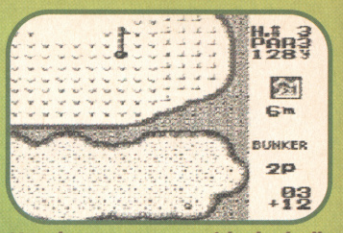
There's 36 different holes to choose from over two courses, the Master and the Championship. You can't partake in the Championship courses without having completed the Master holes under par. Control wise you can adjust your stance, which allows you to draw (bend the ball to the left), or fade (to the right) as well as the more regular hook and slice, and create topspin and backspin.

Bogey

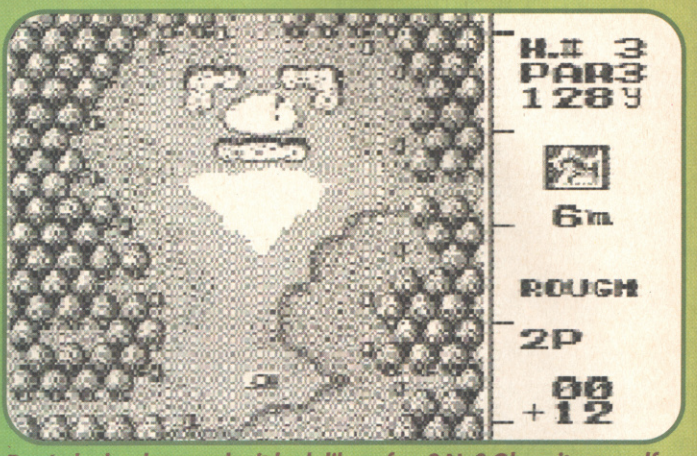
Hitting the ball where you want involves stopping the power bars in the familiar arc shape at just the right moment. Miss by a fraction and the ball can go drastically off course. Once the green is reached the view changes to another familiar golf game view, this time a close-up of the hole. Apart from the excellent battery back-up feature (allows course records and positions to be saved), value is increased as the two-player game only requires one cart. So if you're playing with a friend you could say that one of the Game Boys will have a hole-in-one! ●



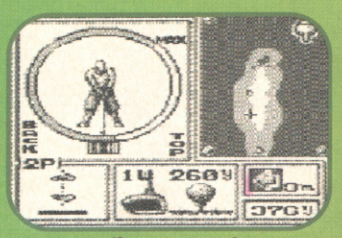
An easy-looking par, it seems.



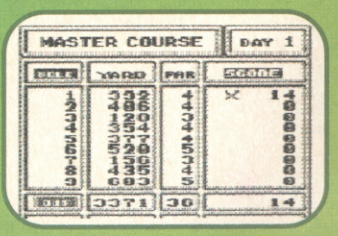
Use the arrows to guide the ball.



Don't the bunkers make it look like a face? No? Oh, suit yourself.



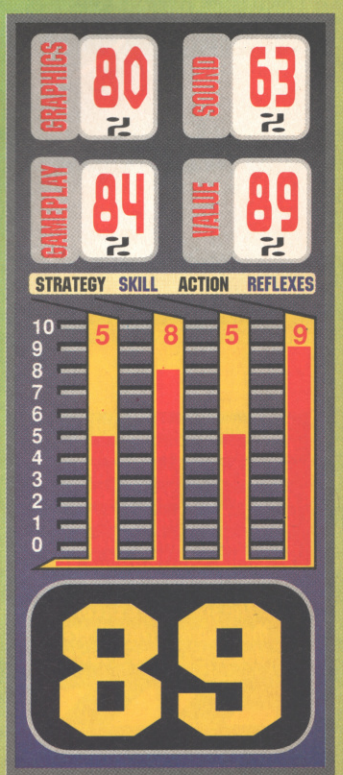
You can tailor your swing.



VERDICT

I hate Nintendo's handheld machine so that in itself shows you how much I respect Konami's interpretation of golf. The game has more than enough redeeming features of its own though. Graphics are surprisingly good, being clear, informative and without a hint of blurring. Sound is what you'd expect from a handheld golf game, but with great control and plenty of challenge. This is an essential purchase that ranks up there with Tetris as a game that you'll come back to again and again.

RIK SKEWS



REVIEW

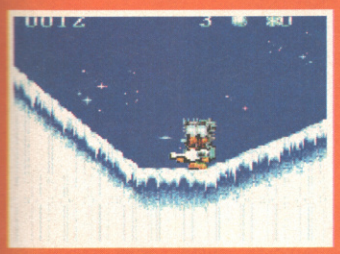
GAME GEAR ▸ by VIRGIN ▸ £TBA

OUT: TBA. Contact Virgin (081-960 2255) for information.

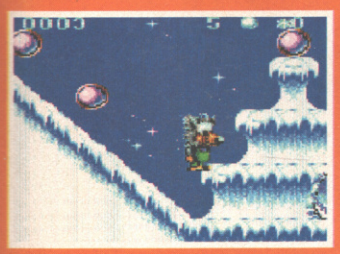
FIRE AND ICE

Graftgold's Amiga platform classic pops up on the dinky Sega handheld. Will it be hot or cold?

The first couple of levels are ice based and quite unresponsive, which is hardly an incentive to keep going on to the successive levels, is it?



Cool Coyote lives up to his name by playing a mean guitar when you leave him alone.



Pick up these jewels to increase your score and to collect extra lives along the way.

An evil being has hidden himself away on Earth and plans to take it over. What's more the inhabitants have called him Suten and accepted him as a great god who must be worshipped. Little does he know that Clemm, his opponent, has picked up the trail. The battle between the two great elemental forces – fire and ice – is about to begin.

Earth, wind...

Clemm knew Suten wouldn't think twice about trashing Earth if they were to meet in battle so he planned another course of action. He decided to use an agent, one Cool Coyote to capture Suten – and that's where you come in. You control Cool Coyote over numerous platform levels; each is divided into three zones. To complete a level you need to collect all six parts of a key and then jump through the exit door.

Thanks to the difficult and unresponsive control method, death comes far too often.

Additional lives can be won by finding a bone-us and collecting it.

... and fire

Baddies can be dispensed with by freezing them with snowballs and walking into them. A special large snowball can be used as well as other special weapons. A number of ice blocks are on each level and these contain various items like key parts and special weapons. Also dotted about the level are jewels. Collect these to increase your score and gain extra lives.

Blast baddies with snowballs.

This level may be hot but the game is strictly mediocre I'm afraid to say.

VERDICT

Graftgold (Andrew Braybrook and Steve Turner in particular) has been responsible for some of my all-time favourite games so I can't understand why this has turned into a standard console platformer. Graphics are adequate, but some of the sprites can merge into the background making them difficult to see. However, the main problem is the frustrating control method, the lack of sensibly placed restart points and the fact it's quite boring and repetitive in places. Avoid.

RIK SKEWS

REVIEW

GAME GEAR | by SONY | £24.99

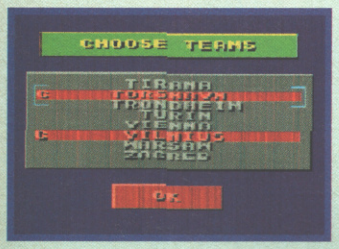
Out now. Contact Sony (071-734 5151) for information.

Sensible Soccer

Sensible Soccer's classic footy game scores an own goal on Sega's handheld

How many times has CVG reviewed Sensible Soccer? Go on, guess. Well, for our less informed readers here's a clue: how many team members were there in The Fantastic Four? Yes, you guessed it (well actually I just told you, albeit cryptically I know), four. Count 'em: Amiga, SNES, Mega Drive and PC so we'll not waste yours and our time telling you that this is the most addictive footie game ever to be released on a multitude of formats.

Normally when a game gets converted to this many formats we'd think twice about giving it the full review treatment. After all, with most games nowadays you can be more or less certain of getting more or less the same conversion on differing formats, can't you?



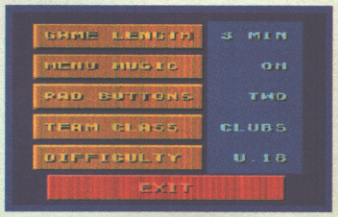
There's a multitude of teams on offer, allowing you to play classic encounters like Torshavn against Vilnius!

It's all gone horribly wrong

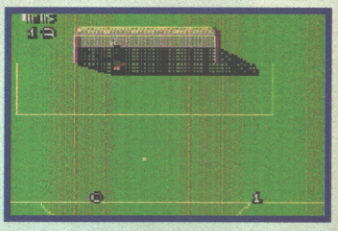
Not this time though. No siree, not on your nelly. This conversion smells like yesterday's nappies. Anyway let's leave the criticism for later. One thing that the Game Gear version has managed to retain though is Sensi's excellent game options.

The game looks fairly similar to the classic Amiga version, but unfortunately plays nothing like it. The chief complaint is the ridiculously unresponsive control method.

Just like real life, team colours can be altered to avoid confusion, unless you're playing in black-and-white that is.



Your first option should be to turn off the highly grating accompanying music.



The ball shoots about so fast it'll take ages until you finally get it in the net.

If you thought the graphics on the Amiga and console versions were small, wait until you see these miniatures.

All the favourite formations are here but the game plays so badly you'd be hard pushed to spot the tactical differences.

Offside surely?

There's lots of tactical formations to choose from to satisfy fans from Milan to Scunthorpe. You can't design your own sets though, which is a real shame, none of those groundbreaking 1-0-9 tactics here. Game length can also be set and the type of pitch that you wish to play your matches on.

The key feature of Sensi, though, is the incredible control of the ball which the joypad enables. However, this feature is sadly neglected here which has resulted in big time disappointment I'm afraid.

VERDICT

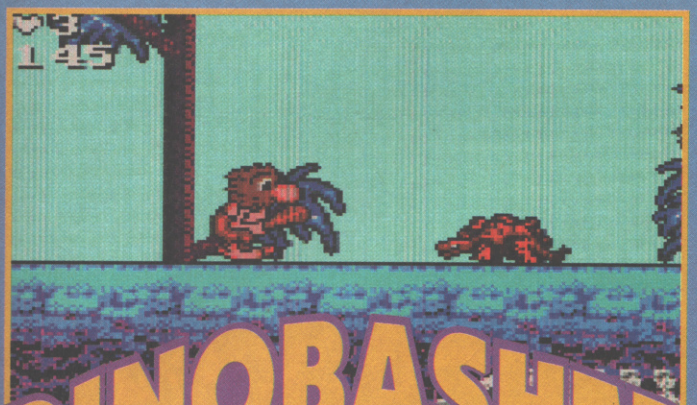
It's been a long time in coming, and I'm afraid there's going to be a lot of peeps peeved with Sony for somehow managing to foul up the best footie game of all time. There's so much wrong with this version of Sensible Soccer it's difficult to know where to start, but the mindblowingly unresponsive controls seems like as good a place as any. To be fair the Game Gear's joypad isn't designed for such intricate control but even so, after the sad graphics and sound are added this is definitely one to miss.

RIK SKEWS

REVIEW

GAME GEAR ▶ by CODEMASTERS ▶ £27.99

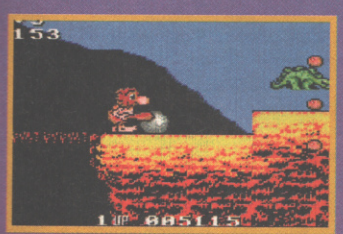
Out: March. Contact Codemasters (0926 814132) for information.



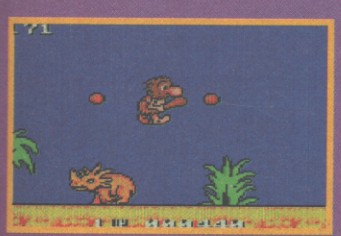
DINOBASHER

Bignose the Caveman wants you to enjoy this game. But is it rather snotty?

The graphics and difficulty improve with progress, but the gameplay is always the same. Bash 'em and run.

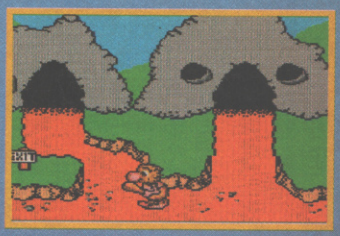


Bash boulders for rocks to bat at baddies with your club.

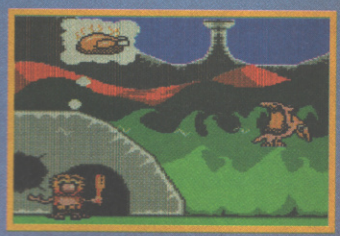


This is actually a boss. Hardly challenging.

Bash the plants because it's difficult to jump past them.



Enter the caves to find a shop where you can buy powers.



The search for food is your quest for starters.

Armed with a club which is actually not much bigger than his nose, this caveman game is a feast of predictable headbashing action. Very similar in may ways to Joe and Mac, Bignose toddles through plenty of prehistoric terrains set across four islands, clubbing no good creatures and avoiding pits and falls. Usual stuff.

Them bones

Among the fast scrolling platforms are rocks and bones. Rocks can be used in a bat-and-ball combination with your club and are best saved for the bosses. If you collect enough bones however, you can go shop for extra weaponry from a list including such powers as invincibility, light magic and even earthquakes.

Unfortunately, to use these spells you have to activate a pop-up menu, which freezes the game while you make your choice, and so this takes away the action element which a power up is supposed to add.

Dino combat

Sadly, the baddies are all rather simple and they are few and far between, which makes little in the way of demands on your combat skills. Things improve the deeper you progress, but there's always a distinct lack of variety and imagination in your opponents. Apart from the bosses, all are easily disposed of with your basic club which makes the whole point of collecting super potent power-ups quite pointless.

Dino Basher has a gentle difficulty curve which isn't going to frustrate you, but it doesn't quite cut it with the gameplay against the current competition.

VERDICT

Most people in the office who have managed to have a quick go with Dino Basher, found they soon got fed up after the first couple of levels because it starts off in such a predictable way and is so unimaginative. It livens up with progression however, and evolves into a fun little game suitable for younger players. The graphics are a bit boring for a platform game, and the power-ups disrupt the gameplay, yet the sprite handles well. Shame about those crap end-of-level bosses.

DENIZ AHMET

64

MATCH

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he reads MATCH...

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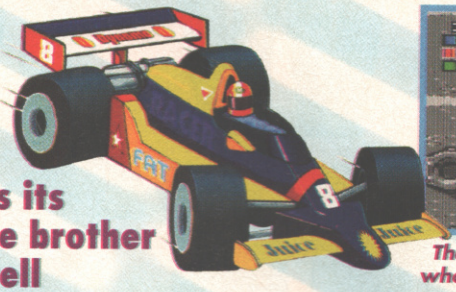
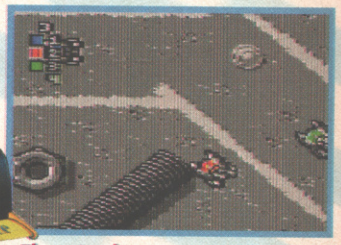
REVIEW

GAME GEAR ▶ by CODEMASTERS ▶ £27.99

Out now. Contact Codemasters (0926 814132) for information.

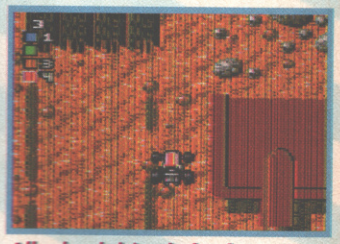
After chart topping success on the Mega Drive, Micro Machines makes its move to the little brother format well





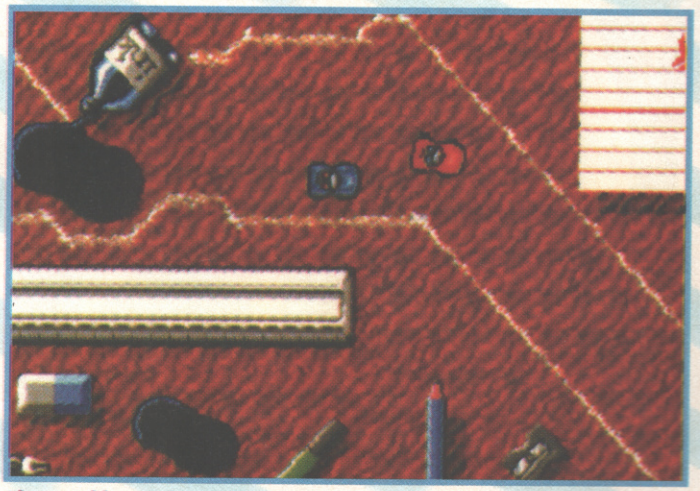
There's always some 'nut' who gets in your way.

THE ORIGINAL Micro Machines SCALE MINIATURES

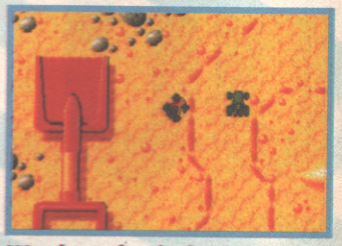


All wheel drive helps here.

Micro Machines is a simple racing game in which the object is to knock out all 11 competitors until only you remain. As long as you keep winning you will move to the next track. What's different about this racing game though, is that instead of racing a Formula One around Brands Hatch you have to race your miniature car across the breakfast table, avoiding waffles and dollops of marmalade that haven't quite made it on to the toast. And there are 28 different tracks and seven similar 'micro' environments to race upon.



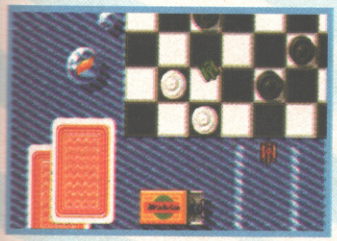
The road hazards can be treacherous: spilt ink, rulers, notepads and those pencil sharpeners are real road hogs.



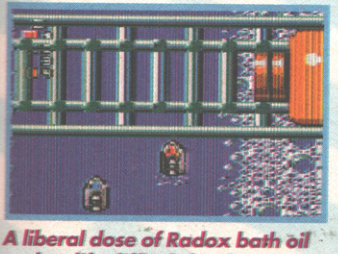
Watch out for the bucket and spade – and the sandcastles.

In the bath

Different terrains will give you appropriate vehicles, so you'll get a boat for the bath and a tank for the rocky terrain. When in the tank you can also fire at your fellow racers.



Try and work out a few shortcuts, like remembering to turn right at the chess board.



A liberal dose of Radox bath oil makes life difficult for the racers.

Each challenge pits you against three competitors at a time. As you improve a dab of strategy can be used by avoiding selection of the worst characters until the later races.

Micro Machines also has a head-to-head mode that lets you race the computer or even a friend (which is more fun if you link two Game Gears together.)

VERDICT

Two players on one machine! This works well with the cars accelerating automatically and you controlling left and right movements (one with the thumb pad, the other with the buttons). The difficulty curve is excellent and the variety of vehicles demand different playing skills as their momentum varies. Graphics are well designed, smooth and just the right speed to be playable. Micro Machines is an extremely accurate Game Gear conversion which is just as fast, and fun to play. Get it.

DENIZ AHMET

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CHEAT MODE

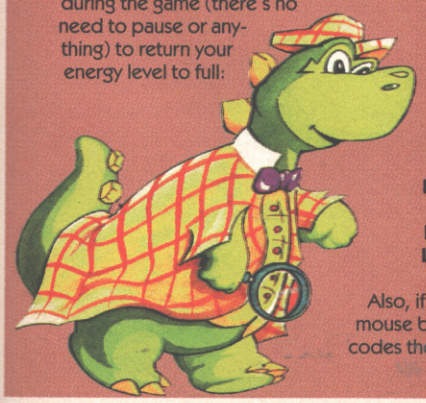
Looking out of a dirty old window, the cars in the streets go rushing by, and you sit there alone, pondering the hopelessness of your lot. Frustrated, you're at your wit's end, hands and fingers are numb from the skill and dexterity you've been inflicting on your joypad/stick, there is only a solitary thought on your mind: 'How can I get past this buggering level?'

But there is hope. There is a light at the end of the tunnel. And we're not talking about a small Ever Ready torch here either, we're talking great big bloody floodlights, in the form of a gaggle of top CVG readers, with tips and cheats coming out of every orifice you'd care to mention (ahem). Well enough of that sort of talk, let's get on with THE tips, but before you do remember that if you've got some tips you'd like to share with Joe Public, don't send them to him, send them to us instead at: CVG Cheat Mode, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU; if they're really good you'll even get a prize!

AMIGA

DINOSAUR DETECTIVE AGENCY

A game that makes you go 'Hmm' has been the general reaction to this game, but we think it's sound enough, its only drawbacks being that it's a little simple and lacking in originality. It does get quite hard going in places though, so if you're running low on energy then simply type in the following codes for each level during the game (there's no need to pause or anything) to return your energy level to full:



LEVEL 1: DINODICK
LEVEL 2: JURASSIC
LEVEL 3: DINOSORE
LEVEL 4: DINOMITE

Also, if you hold down the left mouse button while typing in the codes then you'll warp to the end of the level.

MEGA DRIVE

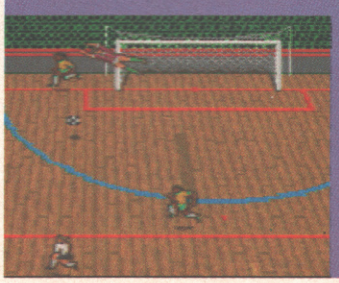
STREETFIGHTER II SPECIAL CHAMPIONSHIP EDITION

Crikey, another Streetfighter II tip. Haven't seen one of those since, ooh the last issue at least. Anyway if you can't beat someone in the game, stick a pad in port two and press start. 'Here comes a new challenger' should appear. With pad two, select the player you are stuck on and perfect him twice. Continue with the one player game and you should proceed to the next fighter. Cheers to Kevin and Rachid Benachia from London for that one.

SNES

STRIKER

One of the many decent footy games around at the moment, but Striker can sometimes be a little too fast to handle. To make you



faster than any other team type the following on the selection screen:

BCDFGHJK
LMNPQRST
VWXYZBBB
BBBBBBBB
BBBBBBBB

CHEAT MODE

SNES

SUPER EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

Here's a list of passwords for the brilliantly playable Super Empire Strikes Back on Brave difficulty level. Space (and talent of course) permits me from writing anything else. Soz!

1-1 1-2 Come on, at least play the game!
1-3 Cave 1- TCCPSJ
1-5 Cave 2- NLBJJF
2-1 Rebel Base- DGBDPL
2-2 Snowspeeder- HMGPWJ
2-3 Final AT-AT- JRGRTD
2-4 Inside AT-AT- MBDNMR

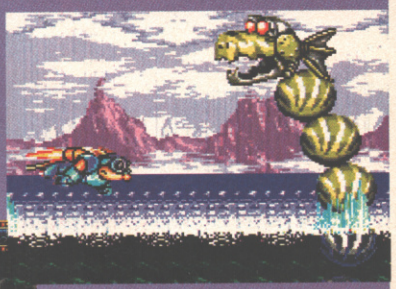
3-1 Rebel Base- Han- HDPPLL

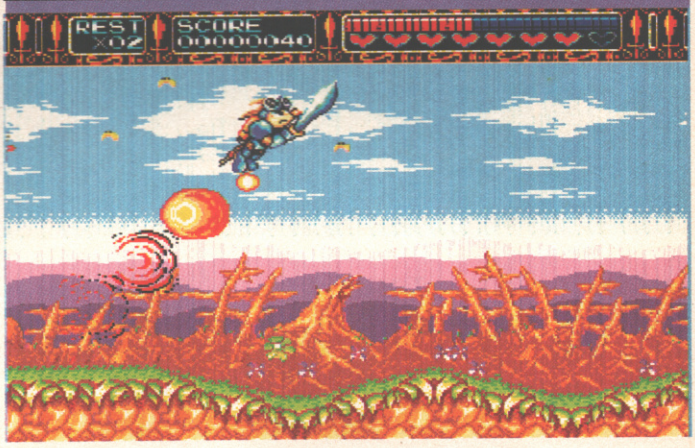
3-2 Han and Leia- GTLCNP
4-1 Asteroid Field- WWBGHF
5-1 Dagobah- PGBNBH
6-1 Cloud City- DLPMMD
6-2 Cloud City- With Chewie- SHRBLW
6-3 Carbon Chamber- LNGPNN
6-4 Boba Fett- FSFMSR
7-1 X-Wing- FCPDPC
8-1 Darth Vader- HPLSHJ

MEGA DRIVE

ROCKET KNIGHT ADVENTURES

Phwoar, what a stunner eh?! Another game that can prove a little easy at times, so here's a code to make everything much, MUCH harder. When the Konami logo appears press DOWN SIX times and UP TWICE then DOWN TWICE. Still too easy? Wait for the Konami logo to appear again then press LEFT FOUR times, RIGHT FOUR times, LEFT SEVEN times, RIGHT ONCE and LEFT ONCE. This difficulty level should carry a warning, it's that tough.



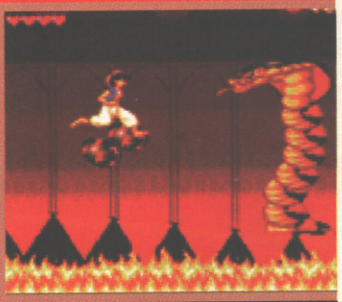


SNES

ALADDIN

Brilliant graphics and sound, decent enough gameplay but a little too easy don't you think? No? Then these passwords should help you out:

Stage 1: GENIE, ABU, ALADDIN, KING
Stage 2: JAFFAR, ABU, PRINCESS, GENIE
Stage 3: GENIE, JAFFAR, ALADDIN, ABU
Stage 4: ABU, ALADDIN, GENIE, PRINCESS
Bonus: JAFFAR, PRINCESS, ALADDIN, JAFAR
Stage 5: PRINCESS, JAFAR, KING, PRINCESS
Stage 6: ALADDIN, PRINCESS, ABU, KING



PC

ANOTHER WORLD

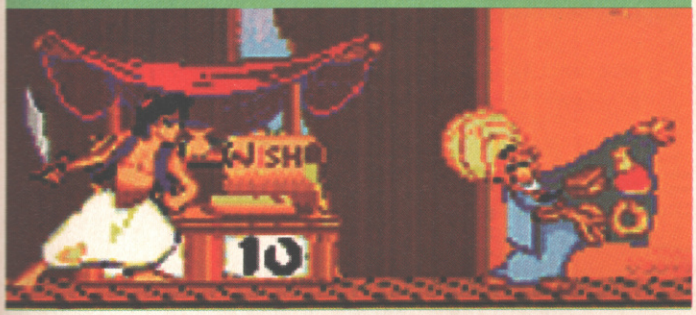
Now, if all you're managing to do is get Conrad Hart continualy ruffled up by a load of over sized yetis then you'll be dead pleased to feast your eyes on this little lot...

1 LDKD
2 HTDC
3 CLLD
4 LBKG
5 XDDJ
6 FXLC
7 KRFK
8 KLFB
9 TTCT
10 XRJT
11 HBHK
12 TFBB
13 TXHF
14 CKJL
15 LFCK

MEGA DRIVE

ALADDIN

Looking for a level skip for Aladdin? How did we know that? Well a) you're in the tips section of the magazine and b) the 'Aladdin' headline probably drew you here. So, start the game and as soon as Aladdin appears press PAUSE, then A, B, B, A, then A, B, B, A again. Press START then before you can say 'open sesame!' you'll have completed the level.



CD32

LIBERATION

Cor blimey guv'nor, pull my braces if this isn't the first tip we've had for Commodore's new wonder machine and one its debut games At the end of the first mission you get a data crystal. This tells you where Toyagan is. Use it on the rest of the missions to find the prisoners without having to go through a complete mission. Much praise to Peter Farrell from Birmingham for that one.

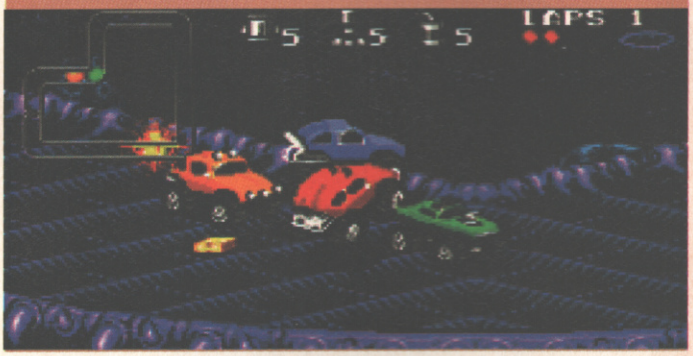
SNES

ROCK 'N' ROLL RACING

Sadly neglected this little racer, we don't understand why 'cos it's a bona fide racing romp with some blinding soundtracks. Here's a juicy selection of tips which should help persuade you to go out and buy it.

Firstly, go to versus mode and select which driver and car you want. Go to the 'level change' screen and push either LEFT or RIGHT on the D-pad. Keep doing this until you see NHO on the ice planet, then press L, R and SELECT simultaneously. Now press RIGHT on the D-pad, and if everything is hunky dory you should be able to play on Inferno, the difficult bonus planet.

Finally if you want to see a sad bit of corporate plugging then go to Tarquinn, hold down L, R and SELECT together and you should be able to select Olaf, who is one of the characters from Interplay's excellent The Lost Vikings.



SNES

FIRST SAMURAI

Here's a nifty level select for the conversion of the old Amiga classic. Select the options screen, press and hold down the X, A, L and R buttons. Two large graphical doors should now begin to close on-screen. While this is happening, keep the buttons held down and the direction the D-pad is pressed will determine the level selected. RIGHT gives you Stage 1-2, Down Stage 2-1, LEFT Stage 2-2 and UP Stage 3.

GAME GEAR

TALE SPIN

Fancy infinite energy? Yeah, me too. Well the thing you have to do is pause the game during the aeroplane stages and rotate the D-pad clockwise. Hold tight until you hear a sort of bell sound then unpause the game. What do you get? Huzzah! More energy than you could possibly know what to do with.

CHEAT MODE

SNES

AERO THE ACROBAT

Aargh, I've still got the music from this zipping about in my brain it's just so catchy. Mind you, the game itself brings back pleasant memories too. Anyway, here's a code that allows you to skip levels one at a time. On the start/options screen press DOWN, A, DOWN, Y, DOWN, A, DOWN, Y. You should hear a jingle and start the level. At the beginning of a level when Aero is dropped PAUSE the game and press UP, X, DOWN, B, LEFT, Y, RIGHT, A, L, R and SELECT. You should now be able to select the next level.

A1200

ALIEN BREED 2

Top blasting action is guaranteed on this essential blast from Team 17.

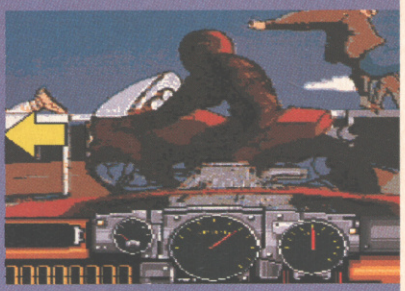
One thing you can't accuse the aliens of being, though, is a soft touch, so to even the score more than a little in your favour try these tasty codes supplied by top Team 17 person Martyn Brown:

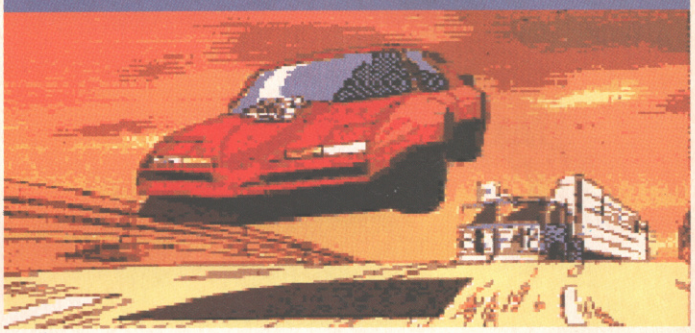
098654 Gives you 10 men
736353 Gives you 50,000 credits
378829 Gives you 50 keys

MEGA CD

ROAD AVENGERS

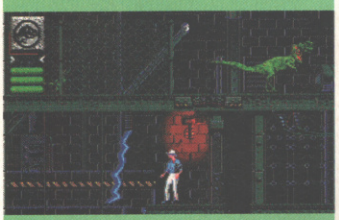
Bit cheesy this one, but if you were unlucky enough to buy it here's a cheat that might make the game a bit more palatable. On the title screen hold A, B and C simultaneously on controllers one and two and then press pause while spinning. Go to 'players' press A six times and last but not least START.





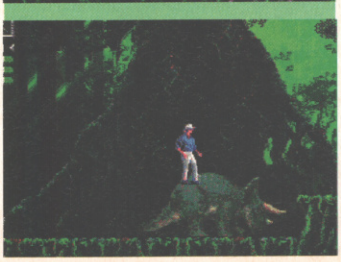
MEGA DRIVE

JURASSIC PARK



Thanks to Jon Brown from Portsmouth for the final code to Jurassic Park:

CVNVR4HH



GAME GEAR

THE OTTIFANTS

Err, I can't think of anything to say here other than here are some codes for The Ottifants. Creative writing eh?

Basement JYSF
Construction Site AOHT
Office PIHE
Jungle NRCF

AMIGA

STARDUST

We love this one here at CVG, and can you blame us with the graphics, sound and music on offer? Excellent price too. The game makes Alien Breed 2 seem easy, though, so to twist things in your favour try some of these passwords:

CDSSUAAAAMGL: 2ND world completed. Access to warp sequence and special mission.

CISUVAATANGK: 2ND world completed. Full weapon power and lots of lives.

DBSSUAAAANGL: 3RD world completed. Access to warp sequence and special mission.

DLSUVQATALMK: 3RD world completed. Access to warp sequence with 11 lives.

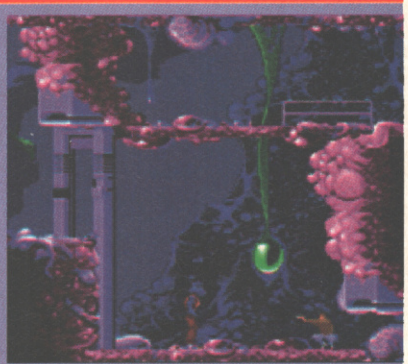
ELSUVXRRAJLL: 4TH world completed. Access to 2ND special mission or final tunnel, with 11 lives and full weaponry.

SNES

FLASHBACK

Coming up is a set of codes for the normal difficulty level from Gordon Fortune in Ireland.

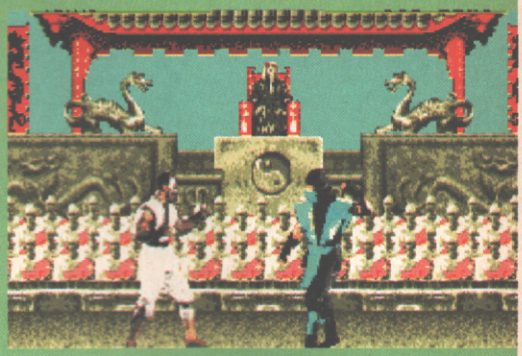
1 DLRCS
2 BGSFM
3 PRHG
4 WNPQVX
5 NMRYL
6 SNTHN
7 KLZHT



AMIGA

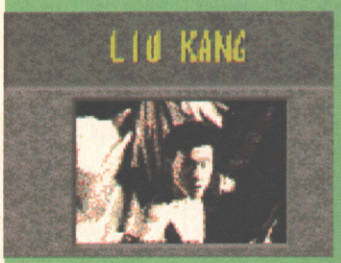
MORTAL KOMBAT

Mortal Kombat time once again. First here's a list of the special moves on the Amiga version of the game. A = left (away) and T right (towards). F = fire. The rest are pretty darn obvious!



Rayden 'Head Explosion' T A A A F

Kano 'Organ Donor' A A F



Lui Kang 'Spin Kick' D A U T D

Scorpion 'Fire Breath' D D F

Sonya 'Kiss of Death' T T A A F

Johnny Cage 'Decapitation' T T T F

Sub-Zero 'Spine Removal' T D T F

And here's a bizarre Game Genie code for the Super NES version that'll turn the sweat red so it almost looks like blood!

BDB4 – DD07

SORT OF THINGS TO REMEMBER, DEAR READERS

Nothing excites the CVG team more (well, that might not be quite true, we're just grovelling actually) than to receive tips, cheats, hints, codes, level maps and full solutions to your latest object of gaming. So if you've sussed out all there is to know about a game, then be sure to tell us here at CheatMode. Also, if you can, please send typed tips in or, if that isn't possible, just keep 'em neat (that's 'neat' as in tidy, not neat as in cool; then again if they are tidy and cool that's even better). Don't delay do it today.

PREVIEW

CD-i

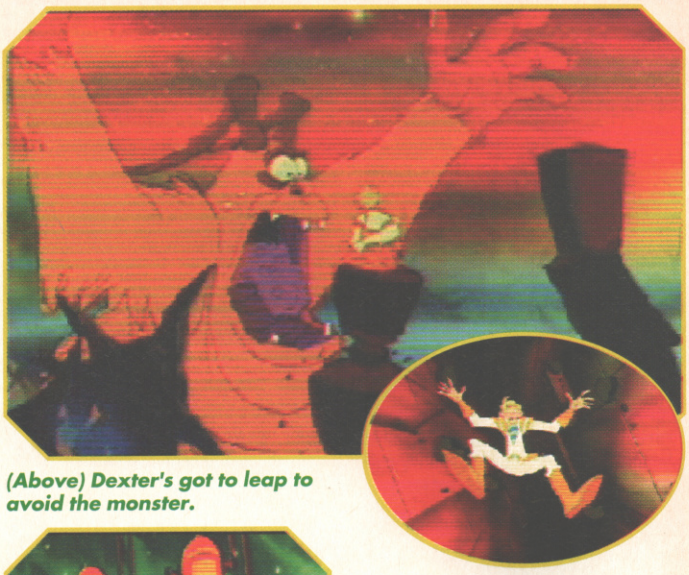
by PHILIPS

£TBA

MAY RELEASE

Stage of Development

90% Complete



(Above) Dexter's got to leap to avoid the monster.

(Left) If you attempt to run straight across, you'll be fried.

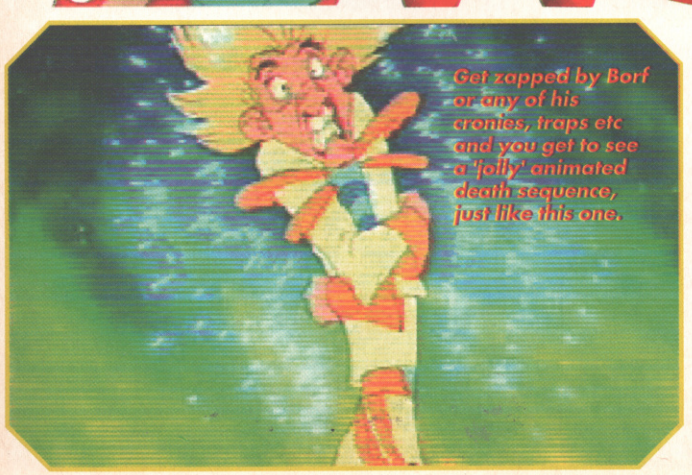
Philips prepare to amaze you with one of the most graphically incredible games ever!

SPACE ACE

The sequel to the groundbreaking Dragon's Lair, Space Ace used pioneering laser disc technology to bring cartoon action into the interactive arena. Created by Don Bluth, the man behind the Steven Spielberg-produced animated movie An American Tail, Space Ace and its prequel were drawn by a team of animators whom Bluth poached from Disney, and that quality shone through.

I need a hero

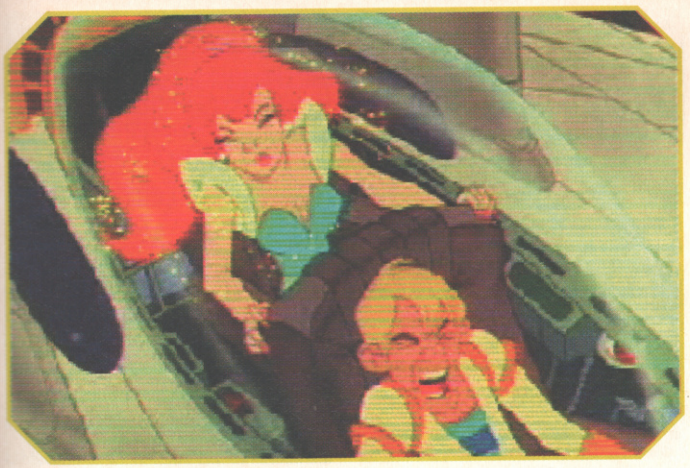
The plot behind Space Ace centred around the evil alien Borf, whose intention it was to take over the Earth using the dreaded Infanto Ray, a device which turned grown-ups into babies. Ace, defender of the world, went after Borf but



Get zapped by Borf or any of his cronies, traps etc and you get to see a 'jolly' animated death sequence, just like this one.

If you look back to the heady days of 1984, you may well remember that Frankie Goes To Hollywood were banned from Top Of The Pops for singing dodgy songs, Richard Burton starred in the movie version of George Orwell's 1984 (it's just a pity old George got it all wrong), and Liverpool FC probably won something. It was also the year in which arcade goers were treated to one of the most eagerly awaited coin-ops ever, Space Ace.

The lovely Kimberly has been kidnapped by the dreaded Borf, and only Dexter/Ace can save her!. Ooer.



Oh no! Ace has been hit by the Infanto Ray, turning him into the kid, Dexter.

Meet the big guy you've got to defeat – he's Borf, and he's one bad lad.

was hit with a partial Infanto charge turning him into Dexter, his kiddy alter-ego. What made matters worse though was that his girlfriend Kimberly had been kidnapped and taken aboard Borf's ship. And basically it went that it was up to you to try and guide Dexter to Kimmy and rescue her from the clutches of the blue terror.

Well what goes around comes around, and just as Frankie has returned to the charts in '94 so has that visual feast of a coin-op. In this CD-i version of Space Ace, the laser disc has been transferred lock, stock and barrel on to one CD and been given the Digital Video treatment, so that you get gorgeous full-screen, full-motion cartoon animation which you can actually interact with!

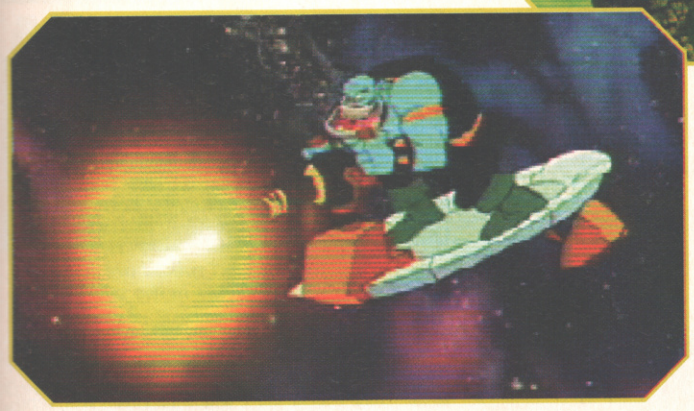
effect only lasts for a short while, however, and Ace can revert back to his child-like form at some very inopportune moments.

That old gameplay question

While you cannot fault the graphics and sound in Space Ace, there's been a battle raging for the past 10 years as to whether Space Ace can really be called a game, or whether it's just a cartoon with a few reaction tests thrown in for good measure. For our part, we'll reserve judgement until we review Space Ace in the next issue – but we have to say that if you're a fan of the coin-op, which still turns heads if you can find one, then you'll probably find Space Ace a VERY close conversion indeed. What we want to know though, is whether or not Philips has any plans to release the original Dragon's Lair or, even better, the third in the trilogy, Super Don Quixote, which was streets ahead, gameplay wise, of either of its two cousins. Tell us, Philips – that would make a great DV game!

Ace blasts away. He can only shoot when he's Ace.

The start of the game, here you have to just jump right twice.

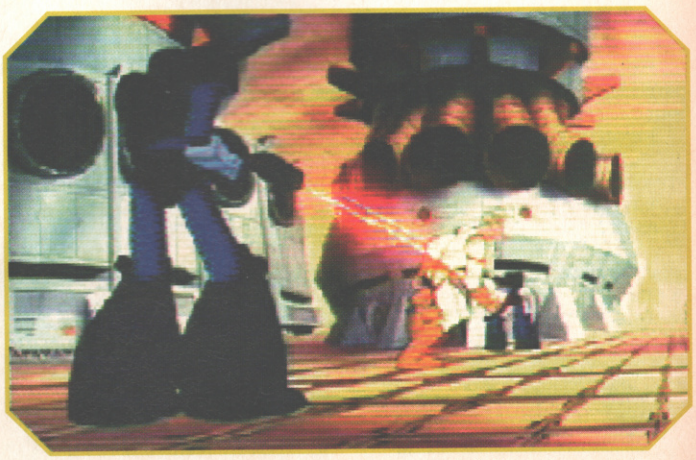


If he has to, Borf will try and blast you to pieces.

1994 - another good year?

OK, so the interaction is somewhat limited, being just a case of reacting to various situations by pushing in any of the four directions or hitting the firebutton. The firebutton is used in two different situations; shooting things is obviously one of them, but another is to metamorphosise into Ace! You see, Dexter was only hit by a low-charge blast of the Infanto Ray, and as such can turn back into the stronger, more powerful Ace at various stages in the game. The

Dexter's escaped Borf's clutches and is on the hunt for Kimmy, who's shouting over the comm' 'Get me outta here!'



You've escaped Borf's hounds, and run straight into tin trouble. Push right before you're blasted by the 'bots.

PREVIEW

MEGA DRIVE

by DOMARK

£TBA

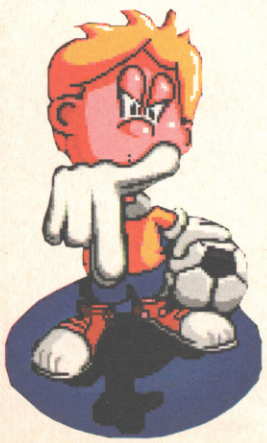
SPRING RELEASE

Stage of Development

90% Complete

MARKO'S MAGIC FOOTBALL

It's Soccer, kids, but not as we know it!



There's more than your normal amount of interest in the country's favourite sport at the moment. At the time of writing, we're still waiting to see whether El Tel gets the England job; the country seems to be in the grip of a Fantasy Football fever (my side's doing great by the way – Ed) and the Carling Premiership is hotting up with Manchester United not looking as unassailable as they did earlier in the season. So what better time for Domark to release a footy-based game?

Kick the football at baddies and they get hurt...

...but here you're footy-less and that workman looks miffed.

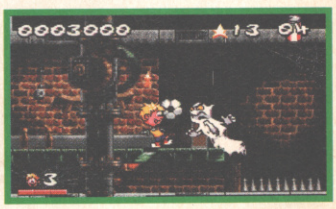
Wahay! The ball's back, and the workman is toast.

Graham Taylor would have killed for skills like that!

The game map, which you're shown at the start of the game.

A bit different

But Marko's Magic Football is a change to your normal kicking balls into nets type of bash. It's actually platform based, with you controlling the Marko of the title against an evil scientist who has devised a toxic gunk which turns living things into nasty creatures. You've stumbled across this plot and have decided to help the unfortunate souls caught up in the scientist's devilish plan. So how come you've got a magic football, eh? That's explained by the football getting splashed by some of the gunk, and because it's not a living thing it gets magic powers. Which sounds a little tenuous to us, but hey, it's only a game.

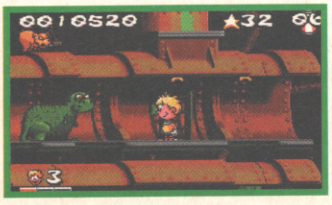


Ghosts and spikes are just two of the terrors in the sewer.

Toon army

Anyway, there's a host of levels to plough through and an army of baddies to take on, one of which is a skit on the T-1000 from T2 – it morphs from a blob of goop into a British bobby. We've played the almost complete version and to be honest Marko's is a hoot, although it does seem similar to Soccer Kid. We'll be reviewing the game next month – join us then to see how well Marko's Magic Football fares.

Similarities to certain Krisalis games are pure coincidence.



Where's your ball, Marko? And where'd the dino come from?

PREVIEW

MEGA DRIVE

by CORE

£TBC

March Release

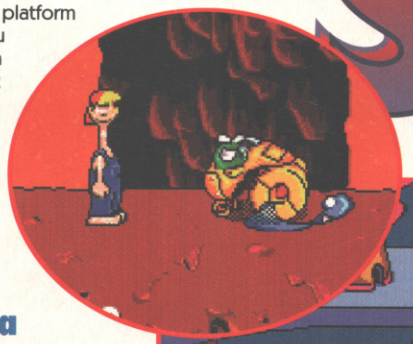
Stage of Development

90% Complete

BUBBA N STIX

Core locates the band wagon and throws its latest 'funny' platform puzzler on to it...

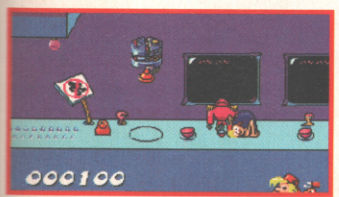
At last someone has come up with a platform game where you don't have to jump on baddies' heads to get them to snuff it. That's your first clue in fathoming that this game will have an original approach to the platform genre.



What a good idea

Core has possibly come up with the best concept and handling for a simultaneous two-character game for some time. Controlling Bubba to negotiate the platforms, traditional genre puzzle elements like floating platforms and crumbling ledges have been dismissed in favour of a novel approach which requires the use of Stix to get across apparent no-go areas, which in turn deliver the puzzles necessary to the plot.

Some typical actions in the game include shoving Stix in to a wall to make Bubba a ladder, or using Stix as a lever for launching boulders. Stix also has many other possibilities, doubling up as a javelin, a tightrope balance, a snooker cue or even a snorkel. Bubba even uses Stix as his main weapon, bashing baddies off the screen or throwing Stix at them. Rest assured that Stix will always fly back to Bubba's hand at his command.



When Bubba dies he puts his ear to the ground for some reason, God knows why.

Stix can be thrown to destroy baddies or activate puzzles. he will always return to Bubba.

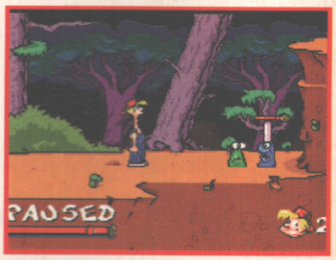
Funny ha ha

Core has cluttered the game with comic animations, from the flickering eyes in the background, to the trees which crawl up behind you when you turn your back. You're never quite sure what's real and what's a joke, but it all plays really well.

Core is offering you an imaginative game with Bubba 'n' Stix. Comic visuals, big sprites and clever puzzles may make it something quite desirable.

Mushrooms provide a spring board to get across gaps. The animation here, as every where else, is funny to say the least. Looks just as vivid as the Amiga version of the game.

Ducking down can usually help avoid the unpredictable dangers that lurk in this game.



Chuck Stix at this baddie and it becomes a platform to get to that ledge.

PREVIEW

MEGA CD

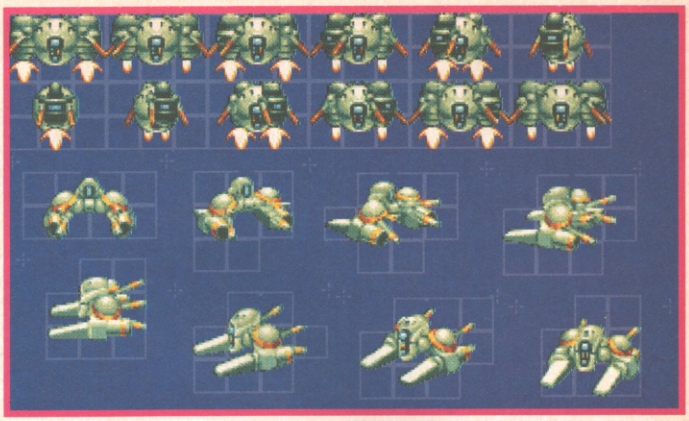
by CORE

£TBA

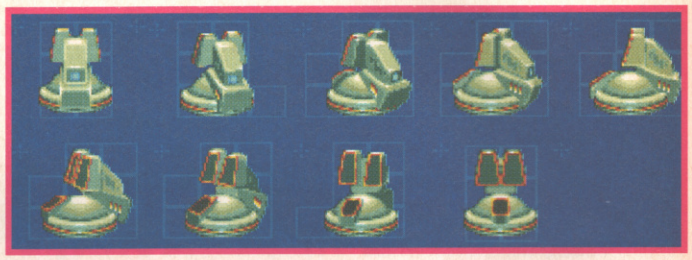
MARCH RELEASE

Stage of Development

25% Complete



Soulstar features excellent animation with sprites which are coloured in 64 colours. Impressive for a Mega-CD.



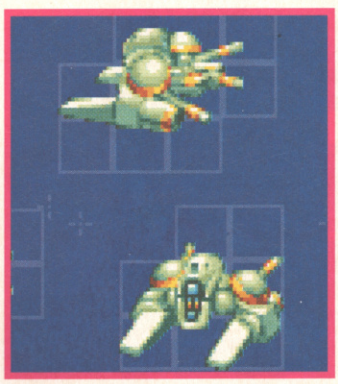
(Above) Sprite rotation will feature intensively during gameplay.

(Below): Even bits of the scenery are animatied well.

SOULSTAR

Soulstar is the first game to use 64 colour sprites on the Mega-CD, could this be Core's answer to Silpheed?

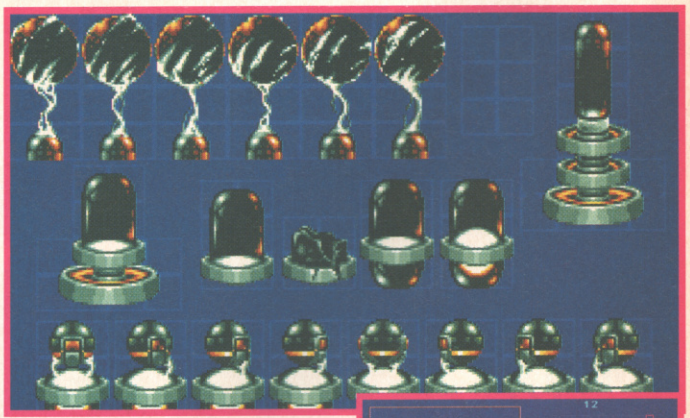
Loads of special effects is what we should expect from any CD game, and with that in mind Soulstar looks like being a desirable piece of software, with a number of visual treats to complement its relentless two-player 3D action.



Choose your vehicle

The 40 missions at hand will lure you through 23 external and 17 internal environments. These environments will offer you the option to morph into one of three crafts depending on their suitability to that mission, the choice on offer being a Tank, Spaceship or Copter, and the action is always guaranteed to be heavy.

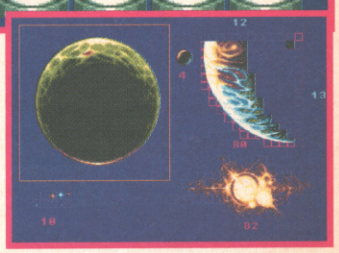
Just by playing the first level you notice right away the great use of sprite scaling and rotation as an attacking Warp Ship looms forwards spitting out a continuous spurge of 64 coloured sprites. It's all done so smoothly in fact that you almost don't notice the ship getting nearer. However, all those colours make it quite difficult to see what's going on.



Two's company

The player two option is going to be an important aspect of the game we've been told, since the idea is that interactivity will be increased by permitting a second player to fire Special Weapons and take charge of allocating the ship's power resources between shields, engines and weapons.

Vocal commentary will keep you company throughout the game with genuine advice and there's even a promise of FMV sequences between missions. Soulstar is looking good and seems like it might be doing some serious business. ●



Soulstar features some nice FMV clips which will play between stages depicting your next destination.

PREVIEW

MEGA-CD

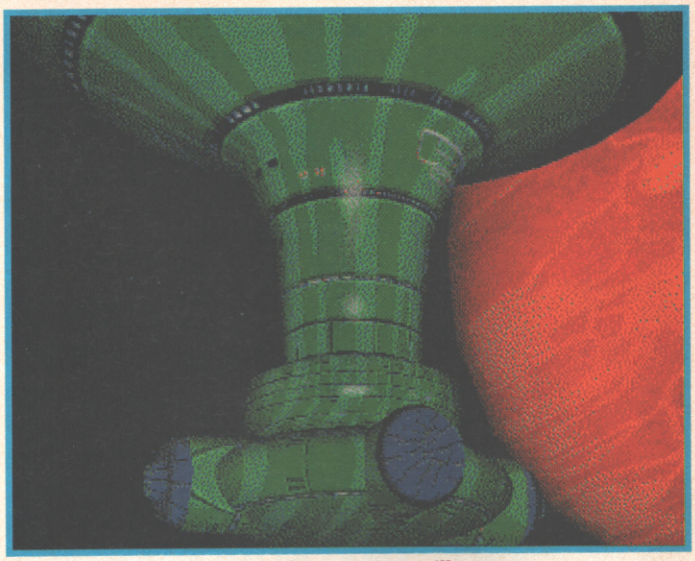
by CORE

£TBA

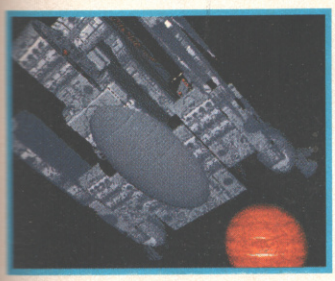
April

Stage of Development

40% Complete



During your journey through space you will come across strange large objects, some of which look like the underside of a toilet.



Flash intro sequence again.

BattleCorps

From the team that gave you Thunderhawk, BattleCorps looks like establishing Core as a quality Mega-CD developer

Three hundred and sixty degree texture-mapped surfaces await trigger-happy players in this tale of kill or be killed among futuristic mining colonies.

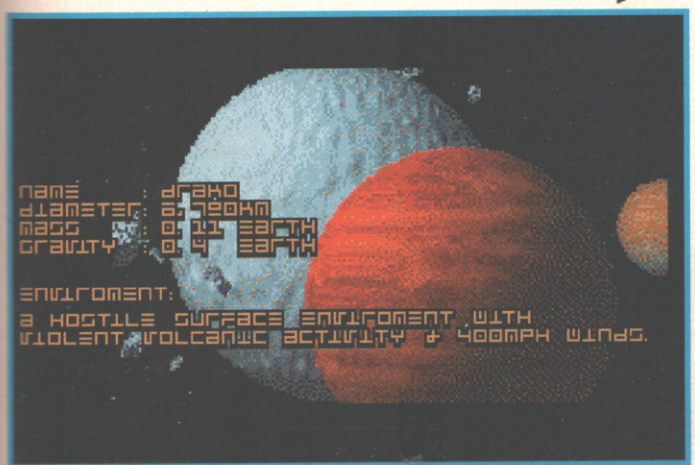
Six different planets are currently being mapped out by Core's team of programmers, and it is these that the gameplay centres around as you battle for resources against enemy forces. Players will command one, from a team of three, BattleTech-style attack craft, glaring out through a cockpit perspective on terrains which range from swamps to volcanic wastelands and are infested by insect-like machines.

The main objective will be a defensive role, protecting existing mine installations from attack, but occasionally the task will be to attack and regain lost bases. Beyond this, each mission will also have a specific task, like destroying enemy machinery, before the customary boss is challenged to a head-on duel.

Deep down

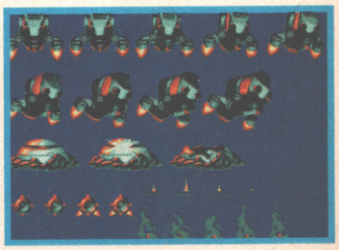
Core claims a tactical approach to gameplay will come from communication links with the unselected team members for clues and so forth. Whatever the depth of gameplay ends up being, this is certainly maturing in to an atmospheric experience.

With its enhanced 64-colour graphics engine from Thunderhawk, a sizzling intro' and FMV sequences, BattleCorps should be good.



There'll be statistics about each planet. The clues are in there.

64 colour sprites for the Mega-CD!



Plus some of detailed animation.

PREVIEW

MEGA DRIVE

by SEGA

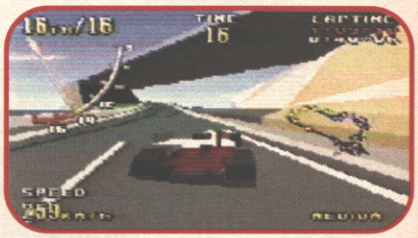
TBA

MAY/JUNE RELEASE

Stage of Development

100% Complete

Sega's new chip claims to make its conversion of Virtua run faster than the coin-op. We've seen it and we agree...



There's some really smooth handling of overhead objects.

Virtua Racing

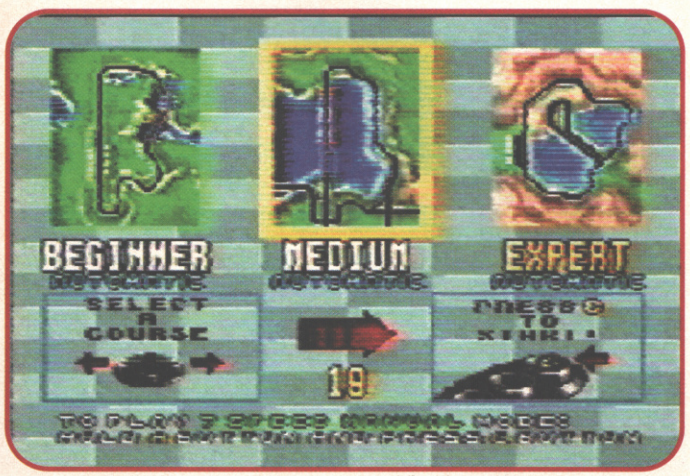
If you get in behind another car you can use their slip stream to accelerate past. However, there doesn't seem too many other cars around to do this.

Virtua Racing is still one of the most impressive coin-ops you're likely to see in the arcades. Not the kind of thing you'd expect to find converted to a Mega Drive eh? In fact, we didn't think it possible when word first reached us, and it wouldn't have been if Sega hadn't triumphed with its new SVP chip (Sega Virtual Processor). This is the first game to use it, and boy can it shift those vectors!

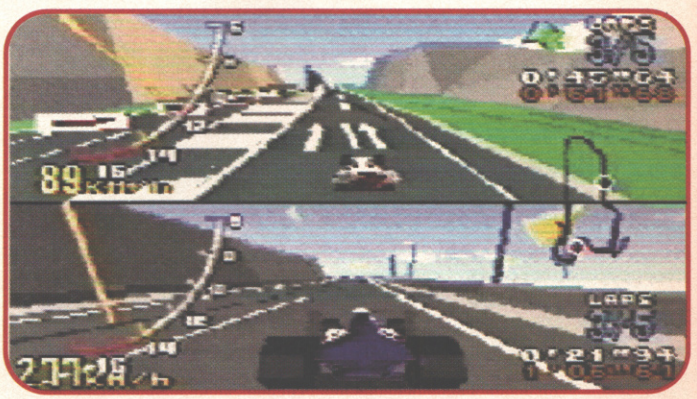
Good ole Sega

Although the cost of the chip is going to bump up the price tag to a jaw dropping £100 or so, talk is that Sega is planning to shove the chip into a converter-type device so as future games which use the technology will cost no more than normal. Pat on the back for that Sega.

Having previewed the game extensively, we can honestly say that almost every aspect of the coin-op has been converted. All the four view angles are there (with a six button pad) as are the three tracks and even the clouds are in

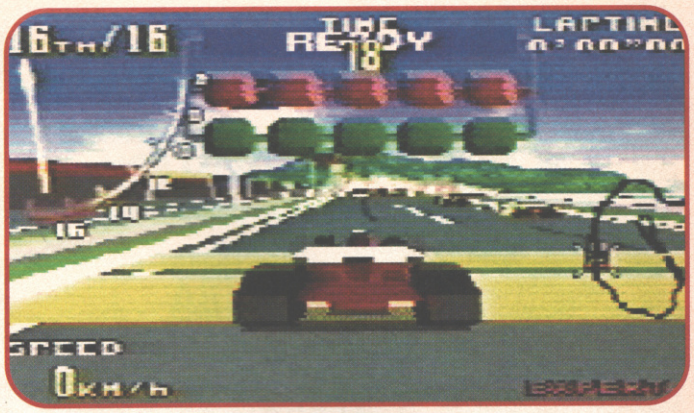


The Mega Drive gives you accurate duplications of the coin-op tracks. Unfortunately, just three tracks can get boring.



In two-player mode there's no slow-down and each player can select between the different playing perspectives.

The tunnel section is one of the best looking parts of the game. Unfortunately, the sound doesn't change while you're in there.



Don't bother trying to overtake at the starting grid. That trick doesn't work here.

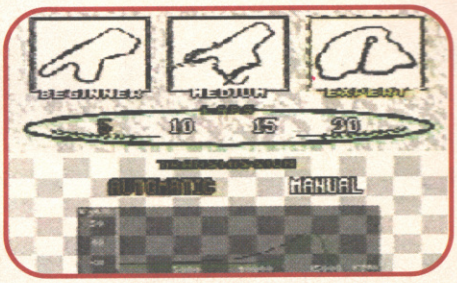
the right places. The only memorable thing missing is the pigeons at the pit-stops and a lack of other racers in split screen two-player mode.

Handles well

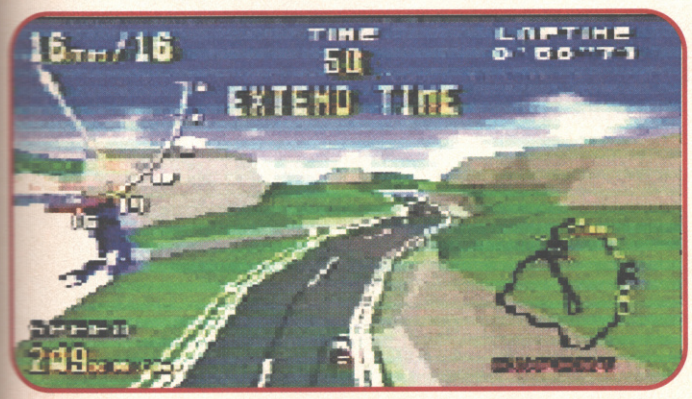
Virtua Racing features three tracks to race on, which account for the three difficulty levels. As usual you progress to other tracks by qualifying in a high position. If you win a race in first place you'll be treated to a replay of the entire track. Handling of the car is actually quite good, but it does feel a bit lighter than the original, and a tab too sensitive.

In two-player mode a configuration screen will allow you to handicap players to balance abilities for increased lasting potential, but it would have been better if Sega had added a few more tracks.

You can do all the fancy crashes from the coin-op so much fun and you can even use some of the coin-op tactics like getting in behind other cars and using their slip stream to accelerate past. Watch this space for the full review. ●



The 'Free Run' menu lets you select any of the tracks for a practice session. Useful, but not much fun.



It's actually easy to play from this perspective because you can see bends a lot earlier. Apparently, it's also easier to overtake the other cars. However, the car looks a bit silly from up here.

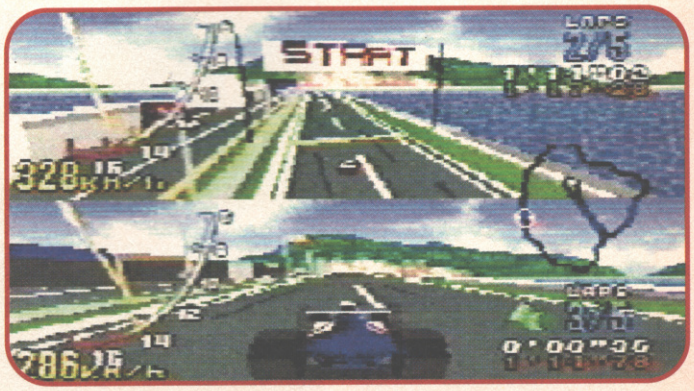
Inside the car you has a more realistic feel to it, and it's more responsive too.

JAGUAR 5 FORMULA 1

One of the imminent releases for Atari's Jaguar will be Chequered Flag II which is currently been coded by Rebellion Software (see page 24). It's the first racing game for the system, and is actually looking faster than Virtua. No need for special chips here, the 64-bit hardware provides plenty of punch for its higher resolution 16-bit images and smoother screen updates.

Chequered Flag will feature similar viewing perspectives, 10 or more tracks, impressive transparent raindrops and an experiment track where you'll be able to do what you like. Rebellion's creative director Jason Kingsley describes the experiment track as 'acid-house driving' allowing you to race 'irresponsibly', ie in turbo without brakes and in thick fog!

Even when you zoom out, the screen redraw remains as smooth as you could expect. But large chunks of scenery appear jerky.



Each time you pass the start flag an annoying little tune blasts away. The sound and music in Virtua is actually quite bad.

PREVIEW

MEGA DRIVE

by DOMARK

£TBA

MARCH RELEASE

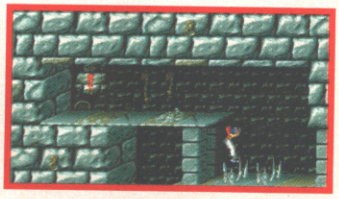
Stage of Development

100% Complete

PRINCE of PERSIA

Games don't come with more gore than this, or more platforms. Yet another conversion looms for the prince of animation.

The evil Sultan spies you in his crystal ball.



Spikes shoot out of the floors.

I really shouldn't have to write this preview. Surely (even Mega Drive owners) must have heard of the classic, slickly animated Prince of Persia by now. The SNES has been the best version so far, and this version looks more or less the same, minus some colour plus a conversion of the moody SNES audio tracks which leaves you going 'Hmmm'.

The tale involves your quest to rescue the princess before the Persian Sultan takes her hand in marriage. Having been beaten and dumped into the palace dungeons, you must work your way up 20 odd levels to the tower that imprisons the one whose heart you're after; it's a tall order and you don't even know if you'll get a date out of it.

The suspence will kill 'ya

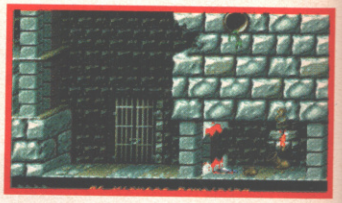
Pioneering the technique of 'human' animation, as seen in games like Flashback, Prince of Persia will be an entirely platform-based puzzle adventure. Each screen will present a puzzle hindering you from the next. Such puzzles however, will be stunts, for which you'll have to avoid loose floor slabs, climb, leap and hang from ledges, tip-toe past touch-sensitive hidden spikes, crawl under gates and even fight your reflection.

Who turned out the lights?

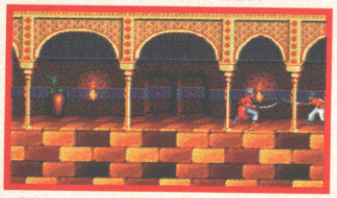
Discovering new dangers will be part of the game's appeal. The gnashing metal jaws for example will split your body in half with more blood than any other Mega Drive game around. You'll also deal with the Sultan's guards who gradually gain intelligence and will chase you. As you fight them with your sword you can even force them into traps set for you. Prince of Persia is going to be brilliant, and it's that simple.

Drinking potions will replace lost energy, but different colour jugs can have various effects, some of which take energy away.

You'll have to take large jumps to avoid those loose tiles.

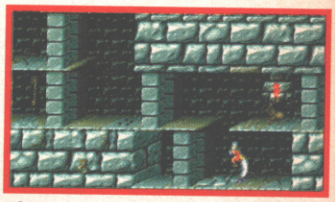


That red stuff is what's left of you in the snapping jaws.

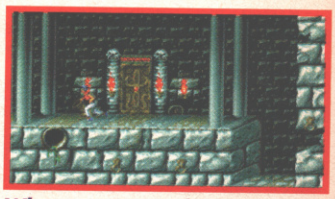


There's also some sword fighting moments in the game.

If you're about to fall, it's possible to grab hold of a ledge.



The path to the princess has many routes.



When you spot a fancy looking door, that's your exit to the next level.

Don't waste time standing around – the clock's ticking.

PREVIEW

PC

by BULLFROG

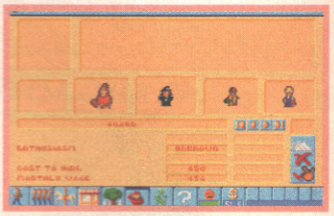
Around £TBA

SPRING RELEASE

Stage of Development

85% Completed

As you can see, you're offered a wide variety of different rides to build, each with their own ratings for excitement, safety etc.



Staff your park with the relevant employees. Or scare the young children with the dodgy-looking man dressed up as a chicken – yes we're serious.

Theme Park

Build your own funfair in Bullfrog's latest strategy game!

To members of the videogames press, he's best known for large parties and special chilli. To gamesplayers, he's the man behind such classics as Populous and Syndicate. He's Pete Molyneux of Bullfrog, and he's putting the finishing touches to his latest – and possibly greatest– game, Theme Park.

Choose your fast food joints – lovers of food (ie fat people) will find this section enjoyable.

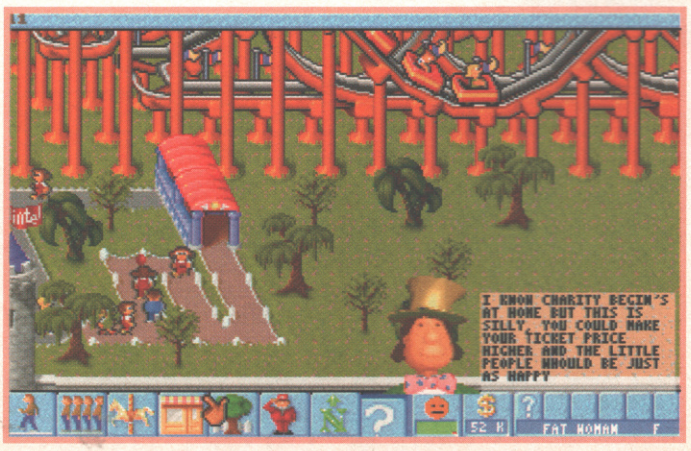
Roll up! Roll up!

You're the boss of a theme park – funnily enough – and it's your job to build up the park to be the best in the world and to maximise profits. There. Simple. And to be honest, it is on the surface – like Bullfrog's other games, the actual mechanics of playing Theme Park are quite straightforward, but delve a little deeper into the program and you'd find incredibly complex decisions being made.

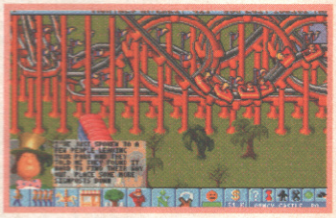
Create your own EuroDisney; only try and make it popular.

I want my mummy

Take the characters in the game, for example. There are loads of them, each with their own characteristics. They don't just do things for the hell of it, either; if you see someone crying, it's probably because they've lost their mum or they've been stuck in a queue for too long. Clever stuff, huh? But there's also some amazingly obvious touches in Theme Park which add so much realism to the game. For instance, put some extra salt into the chips that you're selling at the kiosks and the visitors will get more thirsty, hence they'll fork out for a drink. Apparently, Theme Park is based around Molyneux's first ever game – a business simulation – which sold two copies. After playing the demo version which we picked up at Las Vegas CES, we reckon Theme Park will shift more than a couple. Look out for the review soon. ●



The roller coaster is a popular ride, and so's throwing up strangely.



The roller coaster is so big, it won't fit on to the screenshot! Still, the kids on the ride seem to be having a whale of a time.

Pull up a map to get an overview of your park as it grows and develops.

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PREVIEW

CD-i

by PHILIPS

£39.99

MAY RELEASE

Stage of Development

70% Complete

MAD DOG MCREE

Will CD-i Mad Dog fare better than the 3DO dog?

Get back to the rootin', tootin', baddy-shootin' days of the Wild West in Philips' conversion of the big-screen pistol-packing coin-op! You play a gunslinger who's moseyed into town. Mad Dog McRee and his gang have locked the sheriff in his own jailhouse and taken over the town. The populace are too frightened to do anything, and anyway, they need someone who can shoot straight. They need a saviour – and it looks as though you've got the job, pardner.

Yee-ha

No doubt you caught sight of the atrocious 3DO version a couple of issues ago. There were three major problems with that convert – the graphics were poor, it took forever for the machine to pull animations of shot baddies off disc, and playing with the joypad rendered Mad Dog quite unplayable – in fact, looking back we probably overrated the game at 58%! The game on CD-i looks to be a big improvement over its supposedly superior competitor, however.

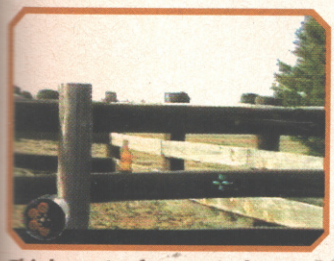
One-eyed Jack is about to shoot – go ahead, draw!

Choose one of these from the options screen.

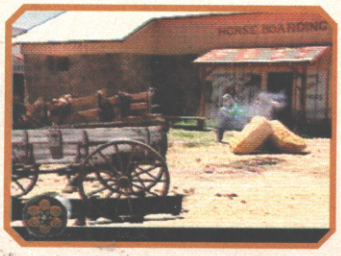
Ride 'em cowboy

Running under the control of the Digital Video cartridge, it's a graphic treat with fluid frame update that doesn't jerk like it does on 3DO. Disc access when pulling off anims is a little laboured, but that could change as we only saw a pre-production gold disc (that said, with 2Mb of memory available there's no reason why the anims can't be stored in RAM for instant access).

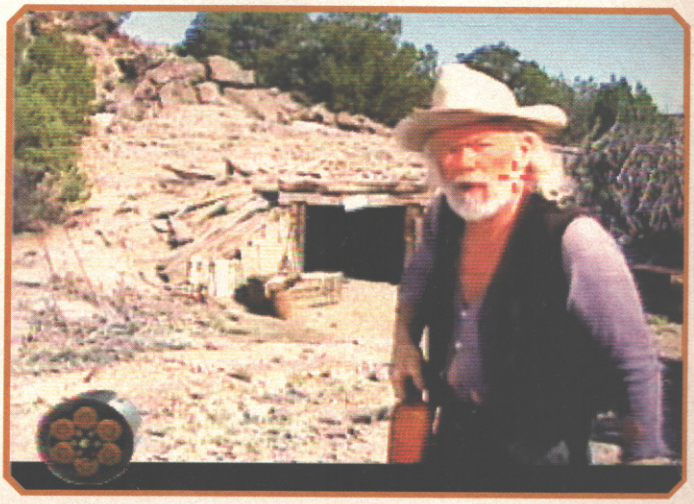
Putting the limited nature of these games to one side (if Op Wolf-style games are your bag, you'll like it; if not, you won't) the only major gripe with CD-i Mad Dog is controlling the gunsight with the remote controller is almost as bad as the 3DO's pad; however, Philips assures us they're going to produce a light gun to go with the game. A full review will be gunning your way next month.



Think you're fast enough to shoot that practice bottle?



Quick! Blast those varmints before they get you.



Don't shoot – he's your friend. Inside that cave, however, are the rest of Mad Dog's gang. And they aren't very chummy.

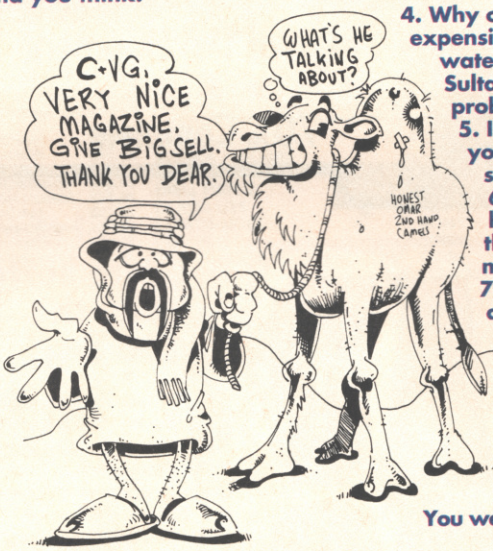
YOB'S MAIL BAG

BLOOOAAARGHH! Welcome to yet another enema-inducing dose of bottom bursting brilliance better known as the one and only YOB'S MAILBAG! This is the place you'll find the sad suppositories you lot insist on calling letters, put down with my customary wit, charm and worldwide gaming supremacy. This month's dungpile includes a selection from sad types from around the world, whose continental incontinence is sent packing with my usual diplomacy and charm. If you reckon you're tough enough to take on the greatest, or you just want to know about games, this is the place to be. Whack those sad and insubstantial little efforts away to: HAS MY BRAIN EXPLODED OR DID I JUST DROP ONE? YOB'S PAN-RATTLINGLY HILARIOUS MAILBAG, CVG, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU. Remember, there's a ridiculously generous £100 for any decent letters - and a fist in the face for the rest.

HELP! MY LIFE IS A DESERT!

Dear YOB,
Please let me know. I want to ask you somethings very special to me:
1. When Fatal Fury out came in Super NES and MD?
2. When Super Streetfighter 2 come out in Super NES?
3. Why CVG do not gives a free picture for any new characters like the new characters in Super Streetfighter II or Fatal Fury 2 or Turteles or Sonic or Mario to give the CVG big sell.
4. Why Super NES games was expensive than Sega games?
5. If there are any secret for level select on Spider Man and the X-Men in Super NES please give into me (It is very hard)!!!
6. In Super Star Wars (Super NES) there is secret to level select???!!
7. I think Fatal Fury Special very nice game in the world what do you think??
Special thank you dear
Omar El-Haj Omar
Sultanate Of Oman

YOB: 1. It outcame on the import what no official yet so stick up the jacksie.
2. It still hiding not come out of SNES yet wait '94 till see what happen. Brain grown a bit then, maybe.
3. Talk the hell about what you? Eating much camel dung I find you think.



4. Why oil more expensive than water? Ask you if Sultan, him tell probably.
5. I will give into you, but too secret it being.
6. In your head is anything alive maybe?
7. I think you am actually right, but how moron like you done this big surprise to me.
You welcome sweetie.

WHO NEEDS NORWEGIANS?

Dear YOB,
(YOU ORANGE BANANA). Print this letter or I must kick your ass. .
Answer these questions or I will have to kick your ass one more time.
1. Do you need the Amiga to play the Amiga CD32?
2. Which do you think is best: Mega Drive or the Super Nintendo?
3. What do you think is the best game on Mega Drive?
4. Do you enjoy that wales are being killed? (I do).
5. Which is best: Mortal Kombat or SF Special Champion Edition?
6. Is Lethal Enforcers worth buying?
7. Is the Mega-CD worth buying or should I wait for the Saturn?
Joakim Roe
Vestnes, Norway

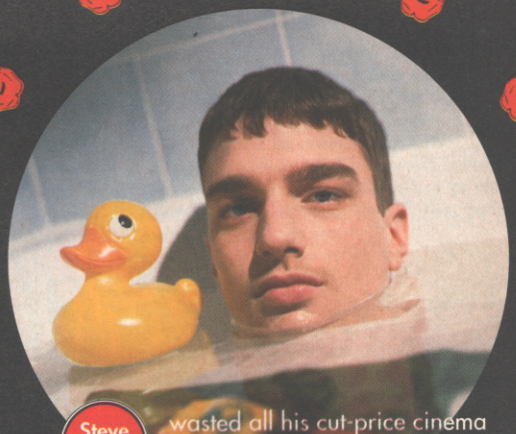
YOB: 1. Of course not, is it the lack of ight in your country that impedes your development?
2. Never been asked that question before, s'pose they call you Mr Original round your way.
3. It's got to be Streetfighter.
4. A few less Taffy sad cases can't be bad.
5. Streetfighter.
6. Not really.
7. Seeing as the Mega-CD is as much use as a festering pile of poodle plops on your oriental rug when the relatives are round, I'd hang on for the Saturn. Unless you live in Norway, in which case I'd rush out and buy one.

Issued by MIDLAND BANK plc 1994

GREED, CORRUPTION & THE MIDLAND LIVECASH DEAL

Sue 14

got one of our free Megadrive systems – then charged her kid brother a whopping £3 an hour to use it.

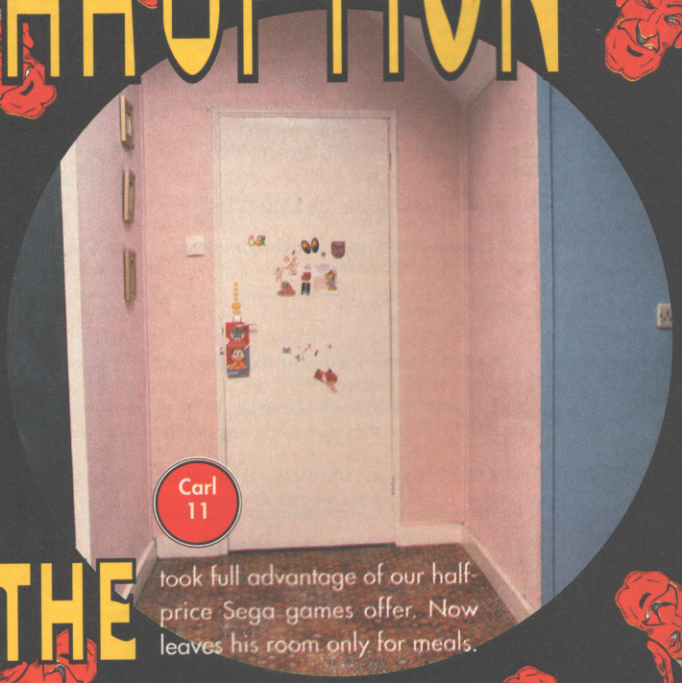


Steve 17

wasted all his cut-price cinema tickets in blundering attempts to impress his sister's friends.

Joe 15

ordered his "Pizza for a penny" pizza and then deceitfully asked his girlfriend to pay half the normal price.



Carl 11

took full advantage of our half-price Sega games offer. Now leaves his room only for meals.

Can you handle it? Opening a Livecash account will bring you many things. Free gifts, competitions. Big money off Sega, Nintendo and Amiga. But it can also bring out the worst in you. You have been warned. Find out more by sending us the coupon, or by asking at your nearest Midland branch, or by calling us on 0345 180 180. Lines are open 8 am – 8 pm, Monday to Friday. All calls charged at local rates. Livecash is available to 11 – 18 year olds.

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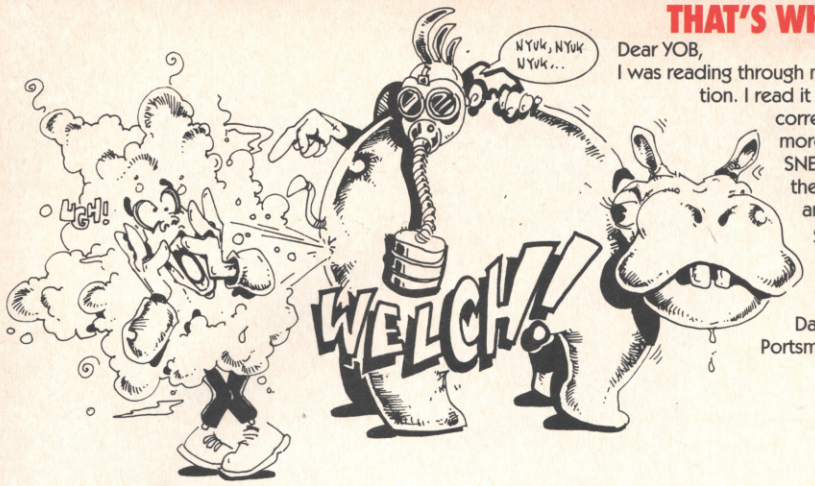
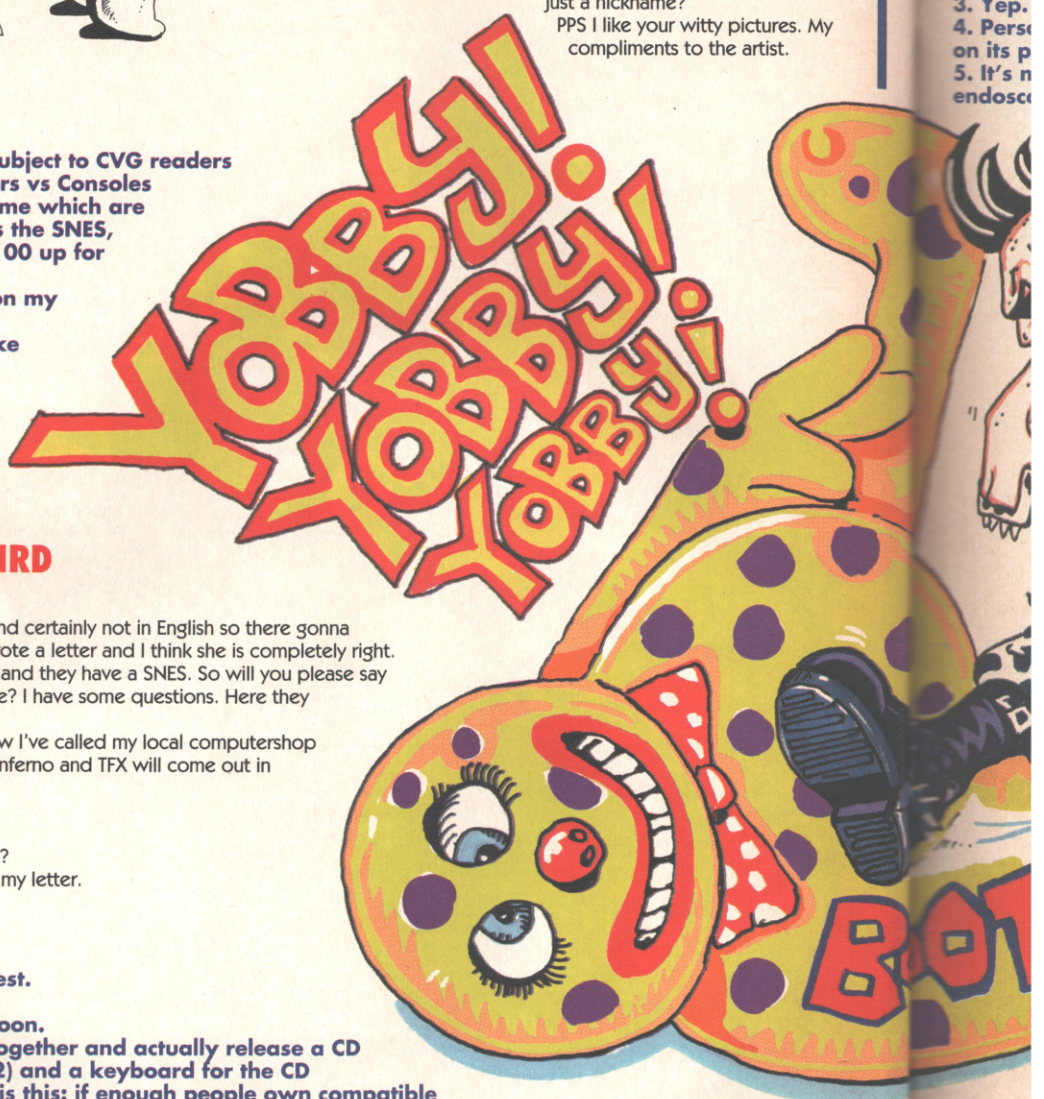


Dear YOB,
I was reading through my December issue when I came to your Mailbag section. I read it and thought what Philip Owen wrote was absolutely correct. Me and my mate own Amigas and we spend far more time on our computers than we possibly could a SNES. Don't get me wrong, consoles are good and I like them, but they just don't have any flair so to speak. There are some good points, though, such as good platform games and graphics and being able to have CD add-ons. But the Amiga and PC can produce games such as Indy IV Fate Of Atlantis and so on. Hope you get round to printing this letter.

Darren Welch
Portsmouth, Hampshire

PS Is your name really Yob or is it just a nickname?
PPS I like your witty pictures. My compliments to the artist.

YOB: Right, this is obviously an important subject to CVG readers – and so I'm going to turn it into a Computers vs Consoles debate. Why don't you lot write in and tell me which are the best machines and why (Amiga 1200 vs the SNES, and I'll print a selection and there'll be a £100 up for grabs for the best of the lot.
PS That's the name my mum had tattooed on my backside when I was a baby.
PPS You want to be careful saying things like that when you've got a name that sounds like a wet hippo fart on a cold day in London Zoo. You never know just what might happen.



...AND SO IS THORA HIRD

Dear YOB,
I have never before in my life wrote a letter to a mag and certainly not in English so there gonna be major errors in this letter. In Issue 145 Thora Hird wrote a letter and I think she is completely right. Friends at school laugh at me because I have an Amiga and they have a SNES. So will you please say that Amiga is better otherwise they keep laughing at me? I have some questions. Here they come:
1. I have an Amiga CD32 but I can't find any games. Now I've called my local computershop and they don't know. Do you know when Microcosm, Inferno and TFX will come out in Belgium?
2. Do you think X-Wing will come out on the Amiga?
3. Which is better: TFX or Inferno?
4. Do you think the CD32 is gonna be a real monster hit?
This was my last question. I really thank you for reading my letter.
Frank Thoelen
Hoeselt, Belgium

YOB: 1. I've got no idea and even less interest.
2. Not a chance.
3. They're the same game, you Belgian baboon.
4. Depends. If Commodore does get its act together and actually release a CD add-on for the A1200 (turning it into a CD32) and a keyboard for the CD machine, it might just work. What happens is this: if enough people own compatible kit the software companies will release more and better games for the machine(s). Then more people will buy them for the games and more and better games will be written, and so on. On its own the CD32 won't have enoug.. fans to prove a 'monster hit' but if Commodore manages to hit both console and computer owners at the same time there will be one hell of a lot of people out there owning Commodore machines.
The big problem now, though, is the competition: with the likes of the 64-bit Jaguar already out at less than £200, Sega's Saturn and Nintendo's Project Reality both on the way, it's hard to see CD32 really cutting the mustard. For a change I'm going to reserve judgement on this one, since I'm quite a fan of the Commodore machines and hope they do well. Some of the greatest games of all time were written on Amiga (Captive, Stunt Car Racer, Formula One, Damocles and Hunter to name just a few), but if you want my opinion it's about time Commodore released a ground-breaking new computer with as much impact as the Amiga had when the machine was launched. The Amiga was light years ahead of its time, and if Commodore can pull that off again it will be sitting pretty for another decade.

NOEL EDMONDS IS ONE SAD MOTHER...

Dear YOB,
I sent you a letter last month but you didn't print it. If you don't print this one I will come round your house with a stick of dynamite and shove it right up your bum and light it.
1. What console or computer do you have?
2. What is the best Mega Drive pack to buy?
3. Is Rocket Knight Adventure worth buying?
4. What do you think of Toejam And Earl 2?
5. That 100 quid is mine. What do you think?
Joe McQuillan
Dunblane, Scotland
PS Are you Mr Blobby?

YOB: 1. All of them except the Amstrad GX 4000 because it's the biggest electronic turd ever devised.
2. Streetfighter Special Champion Edition.
3. Yep.
4. Personally I think it's a bit cacky, but lots of sad types reckon its pretty good.
5. It's no good nurse, I can't find the brain. Quick, take out the endoscope before he does himself any permanent damage...
PS Yobby,
Yobby,
Yobby!

WHY DO ALL THE WEIRDOS WRITE TO ME?

YOB: I'm happy to announce that this letter is something of a classic. I'd suggest that everyone cut out and keep it for reflection on those uninspired days when nothing good is happening and you're in need of a bloody good laugh. Stewart has actually deluged CVG with letters over the past few months which are all similar to this. Here's a choice selection of his edited highlights, proudly presented for your amusement:

Dear YOB,
I am writing to tell you that your magazine is brilliant, excellent and perfect in every way. It gives you everything, from a variety of previews, competitions, news, CheatMode, Arcade Action, your very own Mailbag and many more sections to read and enjoy. The magazine is far better than any other in the universe, and I am very proud to own and read a publication of such quantity and quality.

I am a careful observer of magazines and I recommend this one to anyone who feels that good magazines create warmth and power in people's hearts. To some people reading computer magazines is their life, and they absorb every bit of information blasted at them. People have different opinions about the quality of the magazine, and I expect people find this amazing magazine useful to computer owners. Not only that, but they would find it interesting and exciting. If I saw it for the first time then I would pick up the magazine and throw my eyes down at the pages and take in as much computer knowledge as I have and store the information in my head. This would create conversation during computer language. As I have expressed, I am very interested in magazines indeed and I am very interested to hear what people have to say about them. People would ask me if I read the review on Sonic The Hedgehog II and I would say: "No, why?" They would then say: "Because there was a very interesting comment about it."

Most people think magazines are just pieces of paper thrown together. Well, I can assure you that the magazine has been written carefully and read thoroughly to produce such a magazine. I would of thought that CVG was the best, but people think otherwise. I don't agree, because the magazine is well known and is well produced and written. I would certainly buy it if there were plenty of other magazines to choose from.

I am thinking of being a jurnalist (sic) when I grow up, so please print this letter so that I can show it to the interviewers. I'm sure they would be very interested to read it. (I wouldn't count on that - YOB). If I become a jurnalist then I could write an article on the greatest magazine ever: CVG. And print it on the best paper.
Yours Jurnolisticly
Stewart Green
Lancashire

SWEDE AND CARROTS

Dear YOB,
I'm writing to complain about your magazine. For example in issue 144 GO! was part of CVG and not a very good isea because, now the section which GO! used to a separate magazine has less information on handhelds than ever. Take for example (CENSORED ON THE GROUNDS OF BEING ENDLESS DRIVEL ON THE SAME SUBJECT - YOB). Anyway, the real reason I wrote was to ask some questions and here they are:
1. I know you told us what happened to Garth, but you never told us what happened to the rest of the team.
2. Why are the following sections of the magazine no longer in the magazine: What's Your Problem?, Celebrity Challenge and Question Corner?
3. Lastly, how can I get a subscription for CVG?
The One And Only Me (Oscar Molina)
Stockholm, Sweden

YOB: 1. Anglin sank to obscurity in television, Jon sank to obscurity in Bath, Tim was murdered by Paul Rand, Julian has gone to America, Jenny is now an international winter wear model and undercover agent for the Swiss government and Gary is a sad man.
2. What's Your Problem was axed when I put an axe through the head of the bloke who was writing it. Celebrity Challenge was dropped after I accidentally killed one of the celebrities thinking he was from EastEnders. Question Corner was axed because Paul Anglin used to do it but moaned about it, left and sank to obscurity in television.
3. Don't bother. We don't want readers like you. What did Sweden do in the war, exactly?

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I WRITE POEMS, ME

Dear YOB,
Why do people always ask such crappie questions in this magazine? I mean, of course there's a release date... It's out now, you demented wheelchair with no wheels! The list could go on for years, and I could cause great upset to you all. I would just like to say how unique I am on consoles, so that basically leaves me as a supreme star... I'm not boasting or anything, but no-one can pick up the joypad because they see the frightening terror in my eyes... Print this letter to create jealousy... You see it all started last week when my dog was run over by a steamroller. Suck, suck, CVG is best! Here is a poem I have so cleverly written:

I had a bit of cash to spare
And overcome with joy
I went along to Rumbelows
And bought myself a toy.

I used to have a Spectrum
But I flushed it down the bog
'Cos now I've got Mario,
And that game is just a dog.

How I loved that little game
I played it every day
But after I had finished it
The thrills all went away

With no more hidden levels
And Bowser being no more
All I've got is Mario
And he's becoming quite a bore.

There's the European Championship
And tennis on the telly
And CVG said Mean Machines
Was boring, crap and smelly.

I don't fancy R-Type much
The scrolling's far too slow
So all I've got is Mario
And that guy has to go.

Stewart Green
Holme, Lancashire

YOB: It's so effortless. How does he do it? Nothing I could possibly add would say more about Stewart than he has himself. Unless any of you lot would like to add a thing or two...

THE AMBROSIA KID

Dear YOB,
How do you do? I get this mag every month and I think it's so good I even start to dribble at the thought of buying it. Answer these questions or I will come to your house, tie you up and attempt to shave off your eyebrows and nasal hair blindfolded with my chainsaw. Get it?

1. One of my mates reckons that in America Blanka's first name is Jemima and that he's a girl. Is this true?
2. Will there be a version of Super SFII on the Megadrive?
3. Does YOB stand for:
a) You Old Bugger?
b) Yellow Old Bumhole?
c) Yodelling On The Bog?
4. Why do people all over the country think that everyone in Devon lives on farms, drives tractors and eats a certain brand of creamy rice pudding? Tell me that! Thank you.

Ben Baillie
Exmouth, Devon

PS I expect that £100 within a month or your eyebrows will go down the toilet.

YOB: 1. Your mate is a pratt.
2. Yep. Together with the Super NES version, it'll be out in June.
3. None of them. Any more guesses? Whoever gets it right wins a game.
4. Because that's exactly what they do when they're not just standing there with their fingers up their backsides trying to work out which way the wind is blowing.

I'M JUST SAD AND SPANISH

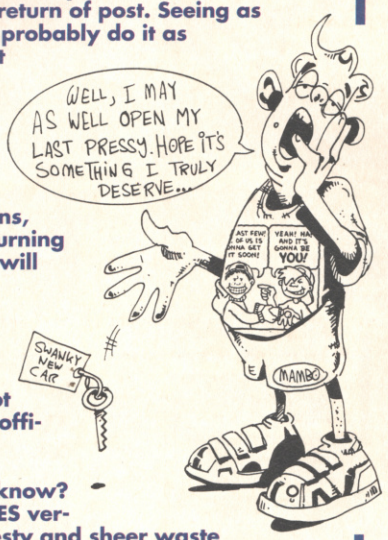
Dear YOB,
It's for me outrageous the answer you took to the Spanish kids that write to this section ("...because you are Spanish after all"), ("Spanish geek"), ("when his sad homeland of Spain is transformed into somewhere worthwhile"). As I see you have a totally wrong sight of that Spain is: for your information, Spain has an enviable history and culture. Maybe this word doesn't sounds to you, but the Spanish CULTURE is one of the world's most importants. I don't understand why you say that to be Spanish is bashful: maybe 'cos we know how to have fun and be happy? Maybe 'cos we like the binge and we know how to enjoy the life? Maybe because we are pert and our womans are the world's prettiest? Maybe 'cos we aren't a boired repellent islands? Maybe 'cos we are more man than you? You are very brave behind your name 'YOB', but I can assure you that if you find any Spanish who knows the way you have speaked 'bout us, he'll hit you so strongly that you never won't speak another time this way 'bout Spain and Spanish people. OK?
Iker Mendoza Capella
Barcelona, Spain

YOB: Whoops, sorry. My mistake. Why don't we all move to Spain and live excellent lives?

SPOILT OZZIE BRAT

Dear YOB,
I am currently at boarding school trying to do my science prep but I'm sick of it, so I thought I'd write a letter to you explaining how I wish I was back home playing my Mega Drive. I don't know whether to be annoyed with my parents. I had my heart set on a Mega-CD for my birthday, so what do I get? A car. The good thing is that it's very good because it was made in England and is one of the old Triumph TR6s and they are pretty rare here in Oz so I suppose it was all right. Anyway, here are my questions:
1. Do you know if there are any more SNK games coming out on Mega Drive such as Burning Fight and Crossed Swords?
2. Is Streets Of Rage 3 definitely coming out? If so, when?
3. Will this be a 24-meg cart?
4. Will Final Fight 2 come out on Mega CD?
5. Will Fatal Fury 2 have a bigger sized cart than No 1?
Bye for now
Julian Landy
Victoria, Australia

YOB: Tell you what, send over your car and I'll send back my Smegga CD by return of post. Seeing as you're Australian, you'll probably do it as well. Anyway, you might be a spoilt little waster but your questions were mildly interesting so here are a few answers:
1. There may indeed be more Neo Geo conversions, but I don't think either Burning Fight or Crossed Swords will make it.
2. What do you think? After the phenomenal success of the first two games, is Sega going to say: "Oh, sod it." and not bother? There's been no official (or unofficial) word, though.
3. How the hell should I know?
4. Seeing as the Super NES version was a diabolic travesty and sheer waste of perfectly good electricity, I sincerely hope not.
5. Yep.



THE IRISH QUESTION(S)

Dear YOB,
I just want some info, so please answer my questions.
1. When will the Amiga CD32 be out in Ireland?
2. How much will it cost?
3. My friends said Mortal Kombat is being made for it. Is this true?
4. How much will the games cost for it?
Sorry about the writing.
Neil McAllister
Co Dublin, Ireland.

YOB: 1. Q: How do you confuse an Irishman?
A: Put him in a room with two shovels and hit him over the head with both of them.
2. Q: What do you call an Irishman with half a brain?
A: A stupid bloody paddy.
3. Q: How many Irishmen does it take to change a lightbulb?
A: Not enough to stop me kicking the cack out of them.
4. Q: How does an Irishman remember to take his trousers down before having a crap?
A: Beats me.

%^&@£"!?!

Dear YOB,
My mum reckons you're a right *%£^&$£ $%£*. What does this mean and is she right? Can I have the £100?
David Watson
Farnham, Hants

YOB: Yes she is and no you &*%$£@% &^%$ can't.

READ THIS IT'S ABOUT STREETFIGHTER

Dear YOB,
I am writing to you about that fave of your letters page – Super Streetfighter. BUT WAIT! Before you screw this up and throw it in the bin, it's not what you think, because what I want to say is that I am becoming increasingly annoyed about the way software companies think they can chuck a couple of extras on to a cart and throw it on the shelves for £60.

This has happened on a number of formats with games like the NHLPA hockey series and the John Madden games. The game becoming infamous for this, though, seems to be Streetfighter II. I bought SFII last year with my SNES, as did many others. But then Capcom and Nintendo released Streetfighter Turbo. Why? OK, so you got a couple of nifty new moves and four extra characters and that would be fine, but immediately after SF2 has sold plenty they announce that Super Streetfighter is to be released in 1994.

Who do they think we are? After all, next summer or whenever the game is released, how many SNES owners will be without either SF2 or SF Turbo? Very few, I think. And then everyone will realise they once paid £60 for a game that just isn't the best any more. Maybe Nintendo and Capcom should think twice before releasing Super Streetfighter on to the SNES. After all, how long will it be before Super Streetfighter Turbo Championship Blackbelt Edition is released? Next Christmas maybe? Will Nintendo ever reach the end?
Tim Nosurname
Mansfield, Notts

YOB: Actually, I think you've got a point – proved by the fact that I can reveal that Capcom is planning, wait for it, Turbo Super Streetfighter in the arcades! No, this is not a wind-up – it is planning to release a version of Super Streetfighter running at Turbo speed. I ask you: is this really necessary? Like everyone else I am starting to wonder where it's all going to go, and nowadays there's some really decent competition out there. If you want my opinion, Samurai Shodown on the Neo Geo is as good as, if not better than, Super Streetfighter. It's got about a billion hidden features and special moves, tons of blood, absolutely brilliant graphics and razor sharp gameplay. It's time Capcom put its thinking cap on, because Streetfighter III is going to have to be really, and I mean REALLY, good to stay ahead of the competition. What do you lot think? Write in and tell me!

BEST LETTER

Dear YOB,
You'll probably not print this letter and if you do you'll probably call me a monkey nut-sucking idiot, but (CENSORED ON THE GROUNDS IT CONTAINED MUCH MONKEY NUT-SUCKING IDIOCY - YOB). Keep up the good work.

YOB: How refreshing. A letter which answers itself.

I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING, ME

Dear YOB,
Could you answer these quezzies for me?

1. Do you think I should buy the Jaguar 64-bit console or CD-i?
2. What games have been released for the Jaguar 64-bit console?
3. Will Streetfighter II and Mortal Kombat ever be released on the 64-bit Jaguar and CD-i?
4. Will 3DO prices cut down to £400 or will it stay at £700?
5. What do you think of the Saturn games console?
6. How much will the Sony PS-X cost?
7. How much do games cost roughly for the Jaguar 64-bit console?

AMIT GULRAJANI
Ilford, Essex

PS Please, please, please print this letter or I shall personally rip your spine out.

YOB: 1. I think you should make your own mind up, instead of relying on me to live your life for you.
2. Currently, Cybermorph and Crescent Galaxy are available for the machine.
3. Hopefully, once the two machines make a big enough impact, but there are no details at the moment.
4. Let's hope so, because face it, nobody's going to fork out £700 for the system when there are so many good new machines available for far less money.
5. What do you think of Saturn the fifth planet in the solar system?
6. I've heard a price of around £350 mooted.
7. Roughly, around forty sovs.

SENSIBILITY IS GOOD FOR YOU

Dear YOB,
I just wanted to tip you off about a new game coming out in December. As my dad works for Nintendo, I should know. It's called 'Sonic Spinball', and the idea is simple; you are Sonic and you are a ball being flicked around the screen. Unfortunately it's on the VIC 20.

MR BLOBBY
Crinkley Bottom

PS If this isn't in the magazine I'll castrate you with a blunt chainsaw, you rectum-faced pygmy, you see if I don't.

YOB: I just wanted to tip you off about some men coming round to your house in a few days time. As my dad works for Rampton high security mental institute, I should know. They're called 'The Men In White Coats', and the idea is simple; you are a sad lunatic and you are about to be carted off to a small cell with padded white walls. Unfortunately I won't be there to see it.

GOOD POINT, POOR PROSE

Dear YOB,
I have been reading this magazine for a long time and the people never change; they always ask 'can you answer my queries or these questions', like in issue 146 on page 144, when he asked about the CD-i (information) and there was supplement in the issue before.
Why doesn't CVG print a YOB question page and ask questions like 'When will the colour Game Boy come out in this country and how much will it cost?' or to praise you and your colleagues for the magazine's review and sarcastic comments on peoples' letters like mine.

RICHARD CURTIS
Sutton, Shropshire

YOB: Poorly constructed letter maybe, but the questions page is a good idea. I'll put it to the boys.

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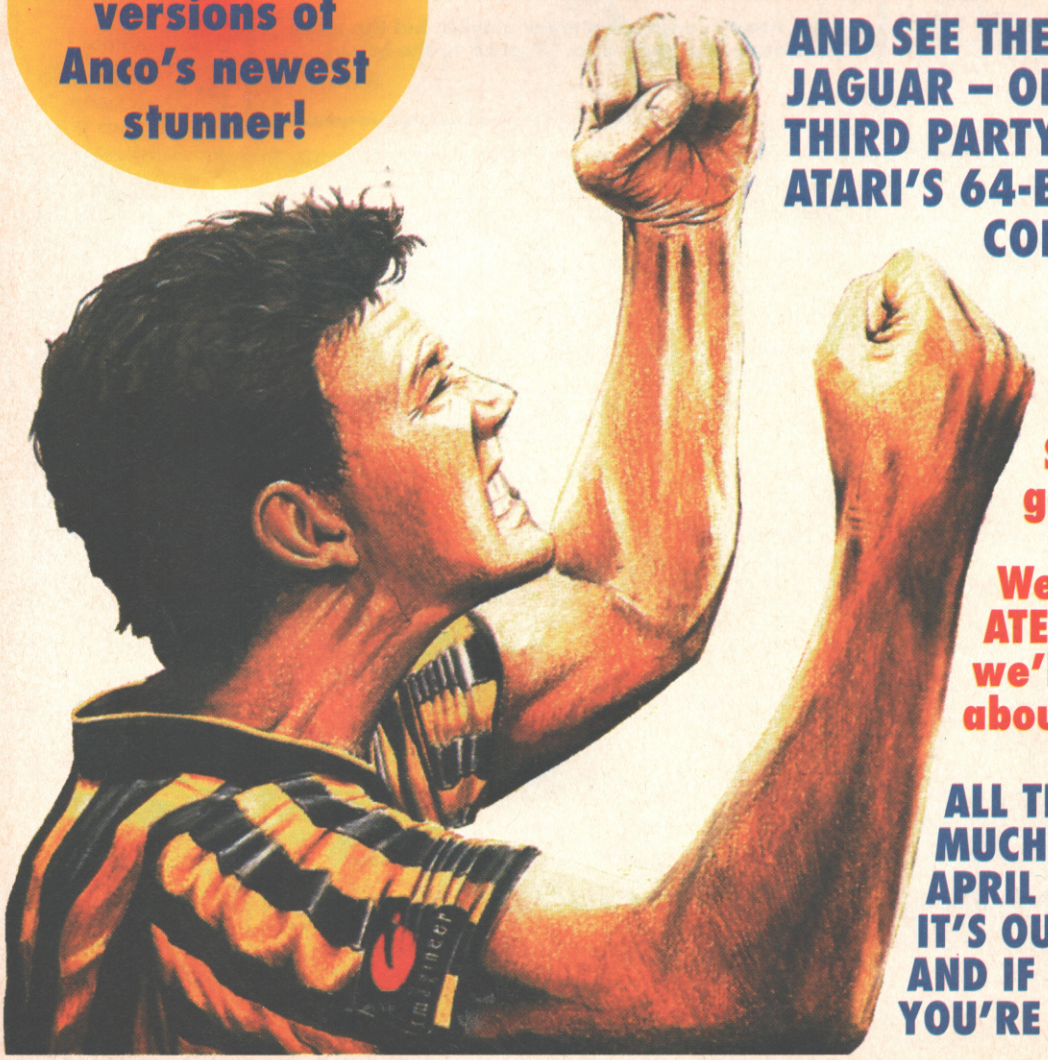
NEXT MONTH

With the Carling Premiership hotting up, the FA Cup Final only eight weeks away and the World Cup starting in less than four months, every company worth its salt will be releasing soccer games. One of, if not the, biggest ever is soon to get a sequel to its sequel – we've seen it and it's a corker!

IT'S KICK OFF 3!

AND WE'VE GOT A SPECIAL MULTI-FORMAT FEATURE ON THE GAME IN THE VERY NEXT ISSUE!

Check out the console versions of Anco's newest stunner!



AND SEE THE GAME ON JAGUAR – ONE OF THE FIRST THIRD PARTY RELEASES FOR ATARI'S 64-BIT SUPER CONSOLE!

PLUS!

See the latest games to hit CD!

We've been to the ATEI coin-op show – we'll tell you all about it next issue!

ALL THIS – AND MUCH, MUCH MORE IS IN THE APRIL ISSUE OF CVG! IT'S OUT MARCH 15 AND IF YOU MISS IT, YOU'RE A SAD FOOL.

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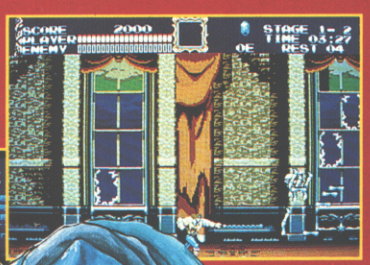

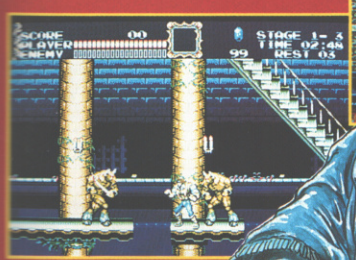

As John Morris the whip wielding vampire hunter, or Eric Lecarde, master lanceman, you'll chase the demonic vampiress Countess Bartley across Europe to prevent her resurrecting the master of all evil - Count Dracula.

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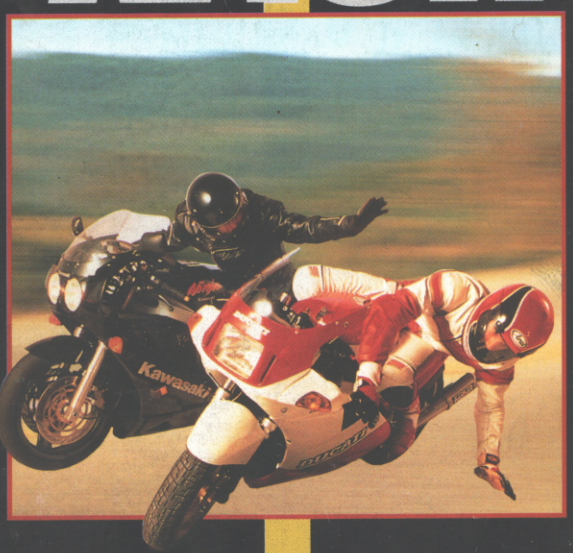

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